CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

SUNDAY ▸ MAY 24, 2026 ▸ VOL: 11 ▸ ISSUE: 309 ▸ PAGES 12 ▸ ₹2.00

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FUEL PRICES JUMP AGAIN!

Petrol prices hiked by 87 paise, diesel up by 91, rates jump by almost Rs 5 per litre in under 10 days; CNG raised by Re 1 per kg

Petrol retail price

- Delhi: ₹99.51 (+0.87)
- Kolkata: ₹110.64 (+0.94)
- Mumbai: ₹108.49 (+0.90)
- Chennai: ₹105.31 (+0.82)
- Bengaluru: ₹107.16 (+0.90)

HIGH SPEED DIESEL PRICES

- Delhi: ₹92.49 (+0.91)
- Kolkata: ₹97.02 (+0.95)
- Mumbai: ₹95.02 (+0.94)
- Chennai: ₹96.98 (+0.87)
- Bengaluru: ₹95.99 (+0.91)

KEY FACTORS DRIVING THE HIKES

- **GLOBAL TENSIONS:** The ongoing conflict in West Asia and geopolitical threats (such as shipping concerns near the Strait of Hormuz) have severely impacted crude imports.
- **DELAYED PASS-THROUGHS:** India, which imports over 85% of its crude oil, held prices steady for a long period. Retailers are now passing on the accumulated burden of these elevated global prices to cover their losses.

NEW DELHI

Petrol and diesel prices were raised by 87-91 paise per litre on Saturday, taking the cumulative increase in retail fuel rates to nearly Rs 5 a litre in under 10 days as state-owned firms passed on soaring international oil prices.

The latest revision pushed petrol prices higher by 87 paise per litre and diesel by up to 91 paise across the country, according to industry sources.

The back-to-back increases follow a prolonged freeze in retail fuel prices and come amid elevated crude oil prices in the global market, tightening refining margins, and a weaker rupee, which have sharply raised the cost of imports.

Petrol price was increased by 87 paise in Delhi to Rs 99.51 per litre from Rs 98.64 earlier. Similarly, diesel price was hiked by 91 paise to Rs 92.49 a litre from Rs 91.58 previously.

With the latest hike, petrol and diesel prices have risen close to Rs 5 a litre since the state-owned oil marketing companies on May 15 ended the hiatus in rate revision, stoking concerns over inflationary pressures and higher transportation costs across the economy.

Petrol and diesel prices were increased by Rs 3 per litre each on May 15 and 90 paise a litre on May 19.

After Saturday's increase, petrol at PSU pumps in Mumbai now costs Rs 108.49 per litre and diesel Rs 95.02, while Kolkata prices rose to Rs 110.64 and Rs 97.02, respectively. In Chennai, petrol is priced at Rs 105.31 and diesel at Rs 96.98.

Prices vary across states due to local taxes.

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) together control 90% of India's fuel market.

The back-to-back rises come after global crude oil prices surged over 50% since late February, following US-Israeli strikes on Iran and disruptions to shipments through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global oil transit route.

'BJP looting public's earnings in instalments'

BENGALURU: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday slammed the Centre over another round of fuel price hikes, alleging that the ruling party was "looting" the common man's earnings "in instalments."Reacting to the latest round of price hikes, he said when international crude oil prices dropped in the past, the financial benefits were entirely withheld from citizens by the Centre. He reiterated the Congress's allegation that PM Modi has been "compromised.""Petrol has now crossed Rs 100. This time around. Looting the public's earnings in instalments! The BJP's appetite isn't satisfied even after slapping a central tax of Rs 1,000 crore daily on petrol-diesel. When international prices were low, they didn't pass on the benefits to the people--instead, they looted them relentlessly, he added.

India's second largest intl cricket stadium will soon be in Namma B'luru

CM Siddaramaiah lays the foundation stone at Surya Sports Village in Anekal; The 80,000-seater stadium will be the second-largest in the country after the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad

BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday laid the foundation stone for an international-standard cricket stadium at KHB Surya Sports Village in Anekal taluk on the outskirts of Bengaluru.

The government has claimed that it is the second largest one after Narendra Modi Stadium in Gujarat. Siddaramaiah said the project would drive tourism, employment generation and economic growth in the region.

"Until now, Bengaluru city and the state did not have an international-standard cricket stadium. Today, at an estimated cost of around Rs 943 crore, the state government is constructing an international-standard cricket stadium in Suryanagar layout in Anekal taluk," Siddaramaiah said while addressing a gathering at the event.

The stadium project is being undertaken jointly by the Housing Department and the Karnataka Housing Board (KHB), and is expected to have a seating capacity of around 80,000, making it the second-largest cricket stadium in the country after the one in Gujarat. The CM underlined that Bengaluru did not have an international-standard stadium.

With the construction of such an international-standard stadium, tourism in this region will grow and the economy of the surrounding villages will also improve, he said. "People from your village told me that land prices, which were around Rs 1,500 per square foot earlier, have now increased to Rs 4,000-Rs 5,000 per square foot because an international stadium is coming up."

He said the project would be built entirely using KHB funds without government financial assistance. The KHB is expected to generate nearly Rs 20,000 crore through auctioning of vacant sites. "I have instructed officials to immediately auction all un-allotted vacant sites and generate funds."

Siddaramaiah launches 'Namma Mane' scheme

The CM also launched the government's 'Namma Mane' scheme, laid the foundation stones for the 'Surya Shine' and 'Surya Divine' housing complexes, and inaugurated symbolic allotment of sites to landowners who had provided land for the housing project.

Highlighting the housing initiatives of the government, Siddaramaiah said affordable housing remained a priority. "Every person dreams of having a house and a roof over their head during their lifetime," he said.

International stadium is our contribution to Bengaluru: DKS

BENGALURU

The Congress government in the state is making a big contribution to Bengaluru by building an international-level cricket stadium and sports complex, said Deouty Chief Minister DK Shivakumar.He was speaking at the foundation stone laying ceremony of the stadium at Suryanagar. "There is a saying in our village. No land will bear fruit without ploughing, similarly DK Suresh and MLA Shivanna had dreamed of this historic program and resolved to pay off the debts of the people of this area. The Siddaramaiah-led government has laid the foundation stone for it," he said. "As important as roots are to a tree, faith is equally important to a human being. Those who have lost their land should also be well off, and sportspersons should also be provided with better facilities, and our government should take this decision to develop this area, Shivakumar added.

Key project highlights

- **LOCATION:** Suryanagar Layout in Anekal taluk of Bengaluru South.
- **PROJECT COST:** Approximately Rs 943 crore.
- **AREA:** Over 75 acres
- **SEATING CAPACITY:** 80,000
- **EXECUTING AGENCY:** Karnataka Housing Board
- **FEATURES:** The facility will be part of a broader "sports village" ecosystem with a podium area, advanced training amenities, and housing complexes.
- **MOTIVATION:** The stadium initiative was catalyzed by the push for expanded sports infrastructure and to accommodate massive crowds safely, particularly following the government-appointed Cunha Commission's findings regarding safety limitations at the older M Chinnaswamy Stadium
- **PROJECTION:** The stadium, once developed, is projected to be India's second-largest cricket stadium after the Narendra Modi Stadium in Gujarat.

Rubio touts US energy on India trip meant to repair ties

NEW DELHI

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio discussed trade and energy with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday on a visit aimed at shoring up relations battered by Washington's tariffs and engagement with New Delhi's rivals Pakistan and China.

Rubio - who said before the trip the US wanted to sell India energy - pressed his case and told Modi that "US energy products have the potential to diversify India's energy supply," according to a US summary of the meeting.

Rubio "emphasized that the United States will not let Iran hold the global energy market hostage," his office added. The energy crisis sparked by the Iran war has set back US efforts to wean India off Russian oil.

US presidents, including Trump in his first term, have long tried to pull historically non-aligned India closer as a counterweight to Russian and rising Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific. Those efforts appeared to take a blow last year when Trump slapped some of the highest US tariffs on India.

India-US will work closely for global good: Modi

Happy to receive the US Secretary of State, Mr. Marco Rubio. We discussed sustained progress in the India-US Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership and issues related to regional and global peace and security. India and the United States will continue to work closely for the global good.

Narendra Modi, PM

Rubio extends Trump's White House invitation to PM Modi

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Saturday extended an invite to PM Modi to visit the White House in near future. The US ambassador to India Sergio Gor confirmed the same on X. He wrote, "Secretary Marco Rubio extended an invite on behalf of President Donald Trump, for Prime Minister Modi to visit the White House in the near future!" "Secretary Rubio briefed Modi on the sustained progress in bilateral cooperation across a wide range of sectors, including defence, strategic technologies, trade and investment, energy security, connectivity, education and people-to-people ties," the PM's Office said.

Coal mine blast in China kills 90

BEIJING

At least 90 miners were killed in a gas explosion in a coal mine in north China, official media in Beijing reported on Saturday, adding that 201 miners have so far been rescued.

The gas explosion occurred at the Liushenyu coal mine on Friday evening. Rescue efforts are ongoing.

The death toll rose to 90 following a coal mine accident in Qinyuan County in north China's Shanxi Province, state-run China Daily reported.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has issued instructions for a comprehensive rescue operation and treatment of the injured.

He has called for proper handling of the aftermath of the accident and sought a thorough investigation into its cause, with accountability pursued in accordance with the law.

Xi has stressed that authorities across the country must learn from the accident, remain vigilant on workplace safety, and intensify efforts to identify and eliminate potential risks to prevent major accidents.

As China enters its flood season, Xi also called for strengthened emergency preparedness and solid flood control and disaster relief measures to safeguard people's lives and property.

Weeks after BJP switch, Chadha named chairman of RS petitions panel

NEW DELHI

Rajya Sabha member Raghav Chadha, who recently switched from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), has been appointed chairman of the Rajya Sabha's Committee on Petitions following the panel's reconstitution.

Rajya Sabha Chairman CP Radhakrishnan nominated 10 members to the committee with effect from May 20, according to an official notification. "Raghav Chadha has been appointed chairman of the committee," a Rajya Sabha notification said.

Other members of the panel include Harsh Mahajan, Gulam Ali, Shambhu Sharan Patel, Mayankkumar Nayak, Masthan Rao Yadav Beedha, Jebi Mather Hisham, Subhasish Khuntia, Rwngwra Narzary and Sandosh Kumar P.

In a separate notification, the Rajya Sabha Secretariat said Chairman Radhakrishnan had nominated Menaka Guruswamy to the Joint Committee on the Corporate Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2026, on May 20.

Separately, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla nominated Arvind Sawant to the same joint committee with effect from May 21.

THE LAST SUNDOWNER?

After 113 years of privilege, Gymkhana Club gets eviction notice

NEW DELHI

The Centre has asked Gymkhana Club in Lutyens' Delhi to hand over the premises by June 5, citing that the 27.3-acre plot was required for "strengthening and securing defence infrastructure".

The order, issued by the Land & Development Office (L&DO) under the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry, stated that the premises, located in a highly sensitive and strategic area of Delhi, is critically required for the strengthening and securing of defence infrastructure and other vital public security purposes.

Nestled in the heart of Lutyens' Delhi, the sprawling Delhi Gymkhana Club stands adjacent to the prime minister's residence on Lok Kalyan Marg.

In its letter to the club's secretary on May 22, the L&DO said the premises situated at 2, Safdarjung Road, were leased to the Imperial Delhi Gymkhana Club Ltd (now known as Delhi Gymkhana Club Ltd) for the specific purpose of maintaining a social and sporting club.

The land is essential to fulfil urgent institutional needs, governance infrastructure and public-interest projects, integrated with the resumption of adjoining government lands, the L&DO said."In exercise of the powers conferred under Clause 4 of the Lease Deed, the President of India, through the Land & Development Office, hereby determines the lease and orders re-entry of the aforesaid premises with immediate effect," it stated.As per the order, the premises will be taken over by the Land & Development Office on June 5.

A member of the Delhi Gymkhana Club, Siddharth said the club would challenge the order through an appeal, asserting that there was no security or other threat linked to the premises.

Prime Lutyens' Delhi land

- The Gymkhana Club stands on one of the city's most valuable and strategically important land parcels, within the high-security administrative zone that houses several key govt and defence establishments.
- Founded during the British era, the club began functioning in 1913 as Imperial Delhi Gymkhana Club. It was renamed Delhi Gymkhana Club after Independence, while the existing structures were constructed in the 1930s.

K'taka govt orders recruitment of 51,000 guest teachers

BENGALURU

The state government has issued an order for the temporary appointment of 51,000 guest teachers to address vacancies in government primary and high schools across the state. With the 2026-27 academic year beginning in May, the Department of School Education and Literacy has taken this step to ensure adequate staffing at the start of the term.

The government has approved the recruitment of 40,000 guest teachers for primary schools and 11,000 for high schools.

The order states that the appointments are purely temporary and will remain in effect until permanent teachers are appointed or until the end of the 2026-27 academic year.

QUICK READ

Govt expands egg, banana distribution in schools

CH News, Bengaluru
The Karnataka government has announced a major nutrition initiative for students studying in government and aided schools across the state. With the objective of addressing malnutrition and anaemia among children, the School Education Department has made it mandatory to distribute eggs or bananas as supplementary nutrition along with the midday meal on all six school days during the 2026–27 academic year. According to the order issued under the PM Poshan scheme, the supplementary nutrition programme will benefit eligible students studying from Lower Kindergarten to Class 10 in government and aided educational institutions across Karnataka. Officials stated that the decision has been taken to improve the nutritional status of childre.

Woman attacked by pack of stray dogs in Bengaluru

CH News, Bengaluru
A disturbing incident involving stray dogs has come to light in Bengaluru, where a young woman was reportedly attacked by a large pack of street dogs while walking on a road in Ramamurthy Nagar. The incident, which occurred late at night in Hoysala Nagar, was captured on CCTV cameras and has once again raised concerns about the growing menace of stray dogs in the city. According to local residents, the incident took place at around 8:30 pm in the Hoysala Nagar area under the Ramamurthy Nagar locality of Bengaluru. The woman was reportedly walking along the road while speaking on her phone when she suddenly encountered a large group of stray dogs.

Man arrested for attempt to assault college student

CH News, Bengaluru
A shocking case involving an alleged attempt to sexually assault a private college student has come to light in Bengaluru. The incident was reported within the limits of the Madiwala Police Station, where police have registered a case and arrested the main accused following a complaint filed by the victim.

Youth ends life a day after returning from rehab centre

He had reportedly been undergoing treatment at a rehabilitation centre for mental health and addiction-related issues

CH NEWS, Bengaluru

A shocking incident has been reported from Bengaluru, where a 28-year-old man allegedly died by suicide just a day after returning home from a rehabilitation centre.

The incident took place within the limits of the Ashok Nagar Police Station and initially raised suspicions of murder due to the nature of the injuries found on the body.

However, a preliminary police investigation later confirmed that the death was a case of suicide.

The deceased has been identified as Gautam (28). According to police sources, he had reportedly been undergoing treatment at a rehabilitation centre for mental health and addiction-related issues. Family members had admitted him to the centre after he was said to be suffering from severe emotional distress and depression.

Officials said Gautam had returned home after being discharged from the rehabilitation facility.

However, tragedy struck the following morning when he allegedly took the extreme step of ending his life by slashing his throat inside the house.

The incident created panic and concern among family members and residents in the area. Since Gautam's body was found lying in a pool of blood with severe injuries to the neck, there were strong initial suspicions that he may have been murdered.

Police personnel from the Ashok Nagar Police Station rushed to the spot soon after receiving information about the incident.

During the initial stage of the investigation, officers carefully examined the scene of occurrence and gathered statements from family members and nearby residents.

Following a preliminary inquiry and inspection of the evidence available at the scene, investigators concluded that the youth had not been attacked by another person. Police stated that Gautam had allegedly inflicted the injuries upon himself, leading to his death.

Authorities have not yet determined the exact reason behind the suicide.

Investigators are currently questioning family members and examining Gautam's recent medical and personal history to understand the circumstances that may have led to the incident.

Police have registered an unnatural death report and further investigation is underway. Officials said they are trying to ascertain whether Gautam was facing any psychological stress or other personal issues after returning from the rehabilitation centre.

The incident has once again highlighted growing concerns regarding mental health challenges among young people and the importance of continuous emotional and psychological support for individuals recovering from addiction or depression.

Boxing coach booked under POCSO Act for 'harassing' trainee

A 50-year-old boxing coach has been accused of sexually abusing a 17-year-old trainee and threatening her family

CH NEWS, Bengaluru

A distressing case has emerged from a private boxing facility located near Kasturba Road in Bengaluru, where a minor trainee allegedly endured months of sexual harassment by her coach. According to a complaint lodged by the girl's mother, the alleged misconduct began approximately four months ago while the trainee was attending regular practice sessions at the club.

The complaint states that the coach engaged in inappropriate touching and other indecent behaviour during training sessions and at other locations connected to the sport.

The mother described a particularly alarming incident that took place on May 17, when the accused reportedly called the teenager to his room while she was in Chennai for a boxing competition.

The girl is said to have resisted his advances, but the complaint alleges that the coach persisted and made improper physical contact despite her protests. The victim reportedly did not initially disclose earlier incidents out of fear, saying the coach threatened her with harm if she told anyone. Family members say the victim kept quiet for a period due to these threats before finally revealing the full sequence of events to her mother.

Following the mother's complaint, police at Sampangiramnagar registered a case invoking sections of the POCSO Act, specifically provisions aimed at protecting children from sexual offenses. Additionally, charges were filed under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code.

Authorities have stated that initial procedural steps have been taken and further investigation is in progress, including statements, possible medical examination, and evidence collection at the training facility.

Local child protection advocates emphasize the need for stricter oversight at private sports clubs and for coaches to be vetted and trained in child safeguarding. They urged sports organizations and parents to insist on transparent reporting mechanisms, background checks, and supervisory policies that protect minors in training environments. Police have appealed to anyone with additional information about the accused or similar incidents to come forward to assist the investigation.

Bangarappa slams Centre over NEET Q-paper leak

CH NEWS, Bengaluru

Karnataka Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa on Saturday launched a sharp attack on the Central government over the alleged NEET-UG question paper leak controversy, claiming that the Centre had failed to conduct examinations properly.

Speaking in Bengaluru, the minister also defended the Karnataka government's decision to permit the wearing of hijab in schools and colleges, stating that the move was based on equality and commitments made in the party manifesto.

Addressing reporters in Bengaluru, Madhu Bangarappa criticised the Central government's handling of national-level examinations and said his department in Karnataka had maintained a clean record in conducting examinations without question paper leaks.

The minister stated that not a single question paper leak had occurred in his department over the last three years. He said the Central government should answer questions regarding the alleged NEET-UG paper leak issue and accused Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan of avoiding public scrutiny over the controversy.

Bangarappa claimed that Dharmendra Pradhan had stayed away from responding to questions regarding the examination issue for nearly a week.

He further remarked that he could teach the Union minister how to conduct examinations without question paper leaks within a week.

The Karnataka minister also referred to the participation of students from backward communities in the NEET examination process. He claimed that nearly 96 percent of students appearing for the examination belonged to backward sections of society and alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party was ignoring the concerns of such students.

During the interaction, Bangarappa also responded to criticism regarding the Karnataka government's decision to permit students to wear hijab in schools and colleges. Defending the move, he said the government viewed it as a symbol of equality and inclusiveness.

The minister said the ruling party had clearly mentioned its stand on the issue in its election manifesto and had implemented the promise after receiving public support in the state elections. According to him, the government was fulfilling the trust placed in it by the people of Karnataka.

He also criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party over its objections to the hijab decision and suggested that party leaders first examine the rules followed in Kendriya Vidyalayas before commenting on the state government's policies.

Bangarappa further stated that there would be no permission for saffron shawls in state-run schools in Karnataka.

He warned that if any students or individuals attempted to wear saffron shawls in violation of school regulations, action would be taken according to the law.

Thaawarchand Gehlot prioritizes moral values in education

BENGALURU

Karnataka Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot called upon graduating students to focus on character building and moral values alongside academic success. Speaking at the 25th anniversary and graduation ceremony of The International School Bengaluru, the Governor emphasized that true education must look well beyond textbook excellence.

Addressing the young crowd, Governor Gehlot noted that in the modern era of artificial intelligence and digital revolution, wisdom and strong ethics are just as crucial as technical knowledge. He reminded the graduates that receiving a degree is not the final stop, but rather the beginning of a lifelong journey of learning. He encouraged them to view failures as valuable opportunities to grow stronger.

The Governor also traced the rich history of the National Public School group, which started in Bengaluru back in 1959 under the visionary leadership of Dr. K.P. Gopalakrishna. He praised the group's expansion into a globally recognized educational network spanning Chennai, Mysuru, and Singapore, known for instilling strong human values.

Highlighting India's steady march toward the "Developed India 2047" vision, Gehlot stated that socially conscious, globally minded youth are the true ambassadors of the nation's technologica.

Min urges calm over Ebola, blasts Centre over fuel price hike, NEET paper leak

CH NEWS, Bengaluru

Addressing the media in Bengaluru, Dinesh Gundu Rao said the Health Department is continuously monitoring the situation in coordination with Central government authorities.

He clarified that no Ebola cases have been detected in India so far and added that neighbouring countries have also not reported any infections.

The minister stated that precautionary measures have nevertheless been strengthened to ensure public safety. According to him, individuals arriving from African nations such as Uganda and Congo would be monitored for a period of 21 days as part of the preventive strategy adopted by the government.

He said authorities have instructed travellers to immediately report if they experience any symptoms associated with the disease.

The minister also appealed to the public not to believe rumours or misinformation regarding Ebola and assured citizens that the state government is fully prepared to handle any situation if required.

Dinesh Gundu Rao added that the Central government has also issued guidelines regarding preventive measures and surveillance related to Ebola.

He emphasised that public awareness and cooperation are important in preventing unnecessary panic.

The minister later criticised the Central government over rising petrol prices and accused it of failing to manage the country's economic situation effectively.

Referring to comments made by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi several months earlier, he claimed that the current economic difficulties and rising fuel prices were consequences of flawed economic policies and international developments.

According to the minister, unnecessary wars and instability in the global market have contributed to the current situation.

He alleged that the Central government had failed to clearly communicate India's position and had not taken adequate steps to protect ordinary citizens from rising prices.

State govt raises minimum wages by nearly 60%

CH NEWS, Bengaluru

The Karnataka government has issued a notification increasing minimum wages for workers by an average of nearly 60%, providing major financial relief to millions of labourers across the state.

The revised wage structure, introduced through the Labour Department, is expected to benefit workers in both organised and unorganised sectors, including employees in private educational institutions, e-commerce companies, courier services, and religious organisations.

The revised minimum wage notification has been implemented in accordance with directions issued by the Supreme Court. Officials said the move is aimed at improving the financial condition of workers who have been struggling with rising living costs and inflation over the past several years.

4.26 Crore Beneficiaries Receive Food Security | The Dream of a 'Hunger-Free Karnataka' Realised

Anna Bhagya -A Modern Form of the Dasoha Tradition

Guarantee Varthe

Bengaluru: "Aashe ichchegenna gaasi maadadirayya, dasohiyaagirpa daasanagirisenna Koodala sangamadeva, dharma" - these immortal lines from Jagajyothi Basavanna's vachana highlight the true essence of compassion and dasoha that every human being must embody. This noble vision of the Sharanas has found expression in the Karnataka Government's Annabhagya scheme. Among the five Guarantee schemes announced by the government led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah after assuming office in 2023, Annabhagya has emerged as one of the most significant and successful schemes, reaching the grassroots and benefiting the most vulnerable sections of society.

The scheme was launched with the objective of providing a total of 10 kg of food grains per month to every member of Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya cardholder families in the state. When the Central Government failed to supply the required quantity of rice, the State Government did not remain passive. Instead, in place of the additional 5 kg of rice promised, it directly transferred cash benefits to beneficiaries' bank accounts at the rate of ₹34 per kg through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), amounting to ₹11,821 crore until December 2024, thereby upholding its promise of being a "government that delivers on its word." Over the last three years, Annabhagya has addressed hunger among 4.26 crore families and fulfilled Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's vision of a "Hunger-Free Karnataka."

Daily wage workers, auto drivers, agricultural labourers, and economically weaker

families have been saving thousands of rupees every month on food expenses due to the Annabhagya scheme. For nearly a year, poor families used the cash directly credited to their bank accounts to purchase pulses, oil, vegetables, and other nutritious food items, as well as pay school fees for their children. The scheme has brought about a transformative change in reducing malnutrition and strengthening the rural economy.

Crores of Beneficiaries: According to government data, more than 4.26 crore beneficiaries across the state continue to benefit from the Annabhagya scheme. Up to 2023–24, thousands of crores of rupees have been transferred directly into the accounts of poor families through DBT, ensuring transparency. The Public Distribution System (PDS) has been further strengthened, and technology has been successfully leveraged to ensure benefits reach eligible beneficiaries.

A Model for the Nation: No other state in the country has implemented free food grains and direct cash transfer support on such a large scale. Karnataka's model of hunger-free and nutritional security is today being widely appreciated by other states and social experts across the country.

'Indira Kit' to be Implemented Soon

The Cabinet has already approved the distribution of the Indira Food Kit (Integrated Nutrition and Dietary Initiative for Revitalizing Annabhagya Beneficiaries) in place of the additional 5 kg of rice under the Annabhagya scheme. Based on family size, beneficiaries will receive tur dal, sunflower oil, sugar, and salt instead of the additional rice.

QUICK READ

Seven-year fugitive nabbed in Mangaluru

Mangaluru

Mangaluru police have arrested Akram alias Boja Akra, a seven-year fugitive wanted in a decade-old theft case registered at Uppinangady police station. He was accused in Crime No. 158/2015 under Sections 457 and 380 of the Indian Penal Code for house-breaking and theft. Police said he had been absconding for years after failing to appear in court during trial proceedings. Acting on sustained surveillance, a special team traced and arrested him at Panambur. He had been on the run for nearly seven years before being taken into custody.

Dug-Up road near Manipal RSB circle raises safety concerns

Udupi

Udupi residents have raised concerns after a damaged stretch near RSB Circle in Manipal reportedly turned hazardous for motorists following road excavation work. Locals allege that the area was dug up without adequate warning signs or barricades and was left unrestored after completion of work. Poor lighting in the vicinity has further worsened visibility, especially at night, leading to multiple accidents where riders lost control after suddenly encountering the uneven surface. Several motorists have reportedly been injured and are receiving treatment in hospitals. Frustrated residents later filled the pit temporarily and placed barricades to prevent further mishaps, urging authorities to inspect the site and ensure proper road restoration and accountability for the unsafe condition.

Wildlife crime probe intensifies in Kundapur

Kundapur

Kundapur forest officials have arrested four persons in connection with the killing of a leopard in the Dottinabailu reserve forest area under the Shankaranarayana range. Two other accused are reportedly absconding. The arrested individuals have been identified as residents of nearby villages, and officials said the accused were involved in illegal hunting inside the reserve forest. During the operation, the Forest Department seized leopard claws, bone pieces, a gun, five live bullets, and two motorcycles from their possession. Authorities have intensified efforts to trace remaining suspects and investigate wider poaching network involvement further.

'Centre clears ₹414 cr Baikampady–KIOCL flyover project'

Centre approves ₹414 crore Baikampady–KIOCL flyover project to improve port connectivity, traffic flow and industrial transport efficiency.

MANGALURU

The Central government has approved a ₹414.16 crore infrastructure project for constructing an elevated flyover and service roads between Baikampady and KIOCL Junction on National Highway 66, Dakshina Kannada MP Brijesh Chowta announced on Saturday.

According to the MP, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has already begun the tendering process for the project, which is aimed at improving connectivity to the New Mangalore Port and easing heavy traffic congestion along the industrial corridor.

The project involves the construction of a 3.075-km road stretch, including a 1.520-km six-lane elevated flyover. In addition, 5.825 km of service roads will be developed on both sides of the highway to separate local traffic from heavy cargo movement, improving road safety and traffic flow.

Officials said the upgraded corridor will significantly benefit industrial transport, especially cargo movement linked to the New Mangalore Port. The flyover is expected to streamline logistics operations and reduce bottlenecks that currently affect the Baikampady industrial area and nearby zones.

The project will be implemented under the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) model, with the New Mangalore Port Authority expected to contribute additional land and support for smooth execution.

MP Brijesh Chowta described the stretch as a key economic lifeline for the region, stating that the upgrade will support long-term industrial growth and enhance infrastructure capacity to meet future traffic demands. He said the development will also improve commuter safety and reduce travel delays in one of the busiest industrial corridors in coastal Karnataka.

He also acknowledged the efforts of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari and Sarbananda Sonowal, and the port authorities for approving the project. According to him, earlier administrative hurdles had slowed development due to jurisdictional issues and funding constraints, which have now been resolved after transferring the stretch fully under NHAI control.

An additional ₹11.63 crore underpass project near Baikampady and Kuloor Junction on NH-66 is also underway, further strengthening infrastructure development in the region. The combined projects are expected to modernize the entire port connectivity corridor and support both freight movement and local transportation needs.

Justice Nazeer inaugurated Palemar Convention facilities in Mangaluru

Justice Abdul Nazeer urges Palemar Convention Centre use for education, culture and social harmony, praising its role in community development initiatives.

MANGALURU

Justice J. Abdul Nazeer, Governor of Andhra Pradesh, has called for the newly inaugurated Palemar Convention Centre and associated halls to be used for educational, cultural, and social harmony activities that benefit the wider community.

He was speaking at the inauguration of multiple convention facilities developed under the leadership of former minister and Vikaas Education Trust chairman Krishna J. Palemar, including Palemar Convention Centre at Maryhill, Palemar Garden at Morgan's Gate, Palemar Farms near Surathkal, and Netravathi Sabhabhavan at Jeppinamogaru.

Justice Nazeer said that such infrastructure should serve as platforms for education, skill development, and community engagement, stressing that education remains a key tool for poverty eradication and human resource development. He also invoked the example of former President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam as an inspiration for youth empowerment through education.

Union Minister V. Somanna praised Krishna J. Palemar's efforts, describing him as a "visionary" who has used personal resources for social welfare initiatives. He said the four-venue project reflects a model of socially responsible development and contributes significantly to community upliftment.

Somanna also announced that the Vande Bharat train service between Bengaluru and Mangaluru is expected to begin within a month, highlighting ongoing railway development as a driver of economic growth. He said the Prime Minister remains committed to coastal Karnataka's development.

Speaker U.T. Khader noted that the new convention centre adds to the region's infrastructure and should support economic and social activities such as weddings, conferences, and cultural programmes. He praised Palemar's personality and service-oriented approach, calling the project a reflection of coastal Karnataka's growth.

Krishna J. Palemar said the convention centre was built with a focus on public service and affordable access, and that a significant portion of its revenue would be directed toward educational initiatives through the Vikaas Education Trust.

The event saw participation from MPs, MLAs, and several social workers, and also included the felicitation of achievers and contributors involved in education, arts, and infrastructure development in the region.

Farmer leader T.N. Srinivas criticised Karnataka government over unresolved land, rehabilitation and forest-related issues in Shivamogga region.

Angry farmer leader slams Karnataka government over pending issues

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

In Shivamogga, farmer rights activist T.N. Srinivas has strongly criticised Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the Karnataka government over unresolved issues affecting thousands of farmers and displacement-affected families in the Malnad region. He questioned the government's accountability and raised concerns over its failure to deliver long-promised solutions.

Addressing a press conference, Srinivas said that several long-pending issues, particularly those involving Sharavathi submergence victims and forest land cultivators, remain unresolved despite repeated assurances from political leaders. He alleged that even after three years in power, the government has not taken meaningful steps to address the grievances of affected communities.

He recalled that before the 2022 elections, senior leaders including Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar had formed committees to study farmers' problems in the Malnad region. Srinivas claimed that assurances were made in public meetings attended by thousands of farmers, where leaders promised resolution of land rights issues. However, he alleged that these promises were not fulfilled after the government came to power.

Srinivas further accused local ministers, including district in-charge minister Madhu Bangarappa, of failing to act effectively on the ground. He also criticised forest department officials, claiming they lacked clarity on rehabilitation and land regularisation matters. According to him, even legal steps taken in the Supreme Court have not led to any relief for displaced families.

He highlighted that nearly 50,000 people are affected due to pending land title disputes and alleged legal cases filed against farmers who had given land for major dam projects such as Sharavathi, Varahi, Chakra, and others. He said that lands traditionally used for grazing and community purposes have been wrongly classified as forest land.

Srinivas warned that farmers would oppose visits by the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister to Shivamogga unless their issues are addressed. He said public anger is growing due to continued neglect of rehabilitation and land rights concerns in the region, and demanded immediate government intervention to resolve the long-standing disputes.

Free eye check-up camp benefits rural residents

KARKALA

A free eye check-up camp was organized at Mundkuru with the aim of providing essential eye care services to rural residents and surrounding communities.

The initiative was jointly conducted by Samruddhi Sanjeevini Okkoota (R.), Namma Friends (R.), and local supporting groups, focusing on improving public health awareness and early detection of vision-related issues.

The camp offered comprehensive eye examinations for people of all age groups, including children, adults, and senior citizens. Medical professionals and volunteers were present to conduct vision screening, identify common eye problems such as refractive errors, cataract symptoms, and other vision impairments, and provide basic medical guidance.

Doctors and health workers also educated participants on the importance of regular eye check-ups, proper eye hygiene, and preventive care practices.

Many attendees were informed about how early diagnosis can help prevent long-term complications and improve overall quality of life. Special attention was given to elderly participants, who are more prone to age-related eye conditions.

Those who required further treatment were given referrals for advanced medical care and advice on obtaining spectacles or follow-up consultations. Organizers also ensured that individuals from economically weaker backgrounds received priority support and guidance for continued treatment options.

The program witnessed active participation from villagers, students, and senior citizens from nearby areas.

Local residents appreciated the effort, stating that such camps reduce the burden of traveling long distances for basic health services and help bring essential medical care closer to rural communities.

Organizers emphasized that the objective of the camp was not only to provide free medical screening but also to create awareness about eye health and encourage preventive healthcare habits.

They added that similar initiatives would be conducted in other villages in the coming months to reach a wider population.

MANGALURU TRANSPORT COSTS

Mangaluru bus fare hike likely soon

MANGALURU

Private bus operators in Dakshina Kannada have indicated that a bus fare hike has become unavoidable due to rising operational costs, but a final decision will be taken after about a month, according to the Dakshina Kannada Private Bus Owners Association.

The association said factors such as increasing diesel prices, maintenance costs, and overall financial pressure on operators are making current fare structures unsustainable. They argued that without revision, it is becoming difficult to maintain regular services and ensure viability of operations.

However, bus owners clarified that no immediate increase in ticket fares has been implemented and that discussions are still ongoing.

The final decision on revising fares will be taken after reviewing the situation over the next month, considering input from stakeholders and prevailing economic conditions.

The statement comes amid broader concerns from transport operators across Karnataka, many of whom have already proposed fare revisions in the range of 10–30 percent due to rising fuel costs and operational expenses.

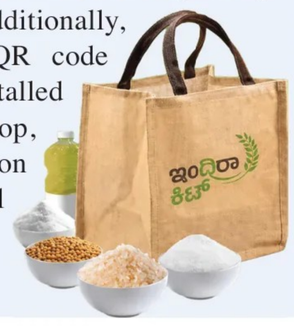
Some associations have also called for government support in the form of subsidies or tax relief to ease the financial burden.

Commuters in coastal Karnataka, who heavily depend on private buses for daily travel, are likely to be affected if a fare revision is eventually implemented.

Transport experts note that fare adjustments are often linked to diesel price fluctuations and periodic increases in input costs.

Authorities and operators are expected to continue discussions over the coming weeks before arriving at a final decision. Until then, the existing fare structure will remain in place, though uncertainty over possible increases has already raised concern among regular passengers in the region.

The Chief Minister has already instructed that the food kit include a maximum quantity of nutritious turdal. Additionally, software enabling QR code scanning will be installed at every fair price shop, based on which ration card holders will receive the Indira Food Kit.



Siddaramaiah Becomes 'Annaramayya'!

Within hours of taking oath as CM in 2013, Siddaramaiah announced the Annabhagya scheme. Initially offering rice at just ₹1 and later making it completely free, he earned recognition for addressing hunger among the poor. Since then, people of Karnataka affectionately began calling him "Annaramayya." The Annabhagya scheme was reinitiated in a stronger form after 2023 as one of the Five Guarantees. What began as a politically determined welfare initiative has become a source of hope for people in the state.

Statistics

4.26 Crore Total Beneficiaries
More than ₹18,897 Crore utilised so far on Annabhagya

"My son met with an accident and has been bedridden at home. I am the only earning member supporting the family. Earlier, when there was no food, we used to walk barefoot and survive on fruits from the forest. Now, we receive rice through Annabhagya. Thanks to our Siddaramaiah, we are able to live peacefully"

Jademadamma, Chamarajanagar

"After my husband's death, I struggled to continue our traditional pottery business due to lack of capital. During that difficult time, the Annabhagya scheme became a major support for my family. The free rice and groceries provided by the government completely removed the anxiety of arranging three meals a day for my family."

Mahadevi, Indi

"My dream was to live independently without depending on anyone. The Annabhagya scheme gave me strong support. Without worrying about food, and with savings from all the guarantees, I was able to buy a cow and start dairy farming. Today, I live with dignity through the income I earn from selling milk every day."

Neelamma, Belthangady

karnataka information

A Fight Against Poverty

I know what hunger caused by poverty feels like. That is why, on my very first day as Chief Minister, I signed the Annabhagya scheme. My aspiration was that no poor person in the state should sleep hungry. That sacred initiative which began then, has today reached crores of homes as a 'Guarantee', and that gives me immense satisfaction.

Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

A Hunger-Free Society is the Foundation of a New Karnataka

Responding to people's hardships is our foremost duty. Building a hunger-free society is the foundation of a New Karnataka. Through Annabhagya and the five Guarantee schemes, our government is committed to making Karnataka the most progressive and welfare-oriented state in the country.

D.K. Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

Food Security Reaches the Last Citizen

Our department has successfully fulfilled the responsibility of transparently delivering the visionary Annabhagya scheme of the Chief Minister to eligible beneficiaries. The Food Department remains committed to ensuring food security reaches even the last poor citizen of the state.

- K.H. Muniyappa, Minister for Food and Civil Supplies

International stadiums needed around Bengaluru says Suresh

Suresh said a new stadium in Anekal is planned within 2000-acre development supporting Bengaluru's rapid expansion

BENGALURU

Bamul President D. K. Suresh has appealed for the construction of international level sports stadiums in all four directions of Bengaluru to encourage youth participation in sports and improve facilities for athletes. He made the statement after laying the foundation stone for an international cricket stadium and related development works at KHB Surya Sports Village in Suryanagar. He said Bengaluru currently has limited major sports infrastructure apart from Kanteerava Stadium, KSCA Stadium and the Hockey Stadium,

and more facilities are urgently needed. Suresh said the new stadium project has been made possible due to the efforts of Housing and Urban Development Minister and KHB officials who pushed the proposal to the foundation stage. He added that similar international sports facilities should be developed in Anekal taluk which is growing rapidly as part of the Bengaluru metropolitan region. He noted that Anekal is not an isolated area but a major extension of Bengaluru where thousands of people travel daily for work and return home. He said a large 2000 acre development zone is already being planned in the region and includes infrastructure projects including an international stadium.Suresh said the stadium location is close to major highways and future transport connectivity will further improve access to the area. He explained that the region is near the national highway and will be connected through a six lane STRR road and metro extension in the coming years. He appealed to the state government to approve road widening works and speed up metro connectivity to support future development in the area.

Suresh also highlighted a land sharing model where farmers have agreed to give land under a fifty fifty development ratio for infrastructure projects. He said farmers will receive developed plots of higher value in return and praised them for cooperating with the project despite earlier concerns.

He added that the value of returned land is expected to be significantly higher than the original agricultural value providing long term benefits to farmers. He urged authorities to remove delays in approvals and ensure that infrastructure projects are completed quickly for public benefit and regional growth. He said the project aims to promote sports culture, improve urban planning and create better opportunities for youth in and around Bengaluru city region.

QUICK READ

Forest team conducts surprise raid on lorry

CH NEWS, Hunsur

The Hunsur Regional Forest Department conducted a surprise raid on a lorry carrying illegal timber and seized logs worth lakhs of rupees. Officials arrested Abdul Shukur, a lorry owner and driver from Malappuram in Kerala. Police said 45 logs worth about Rs. 30 lakh were found in the vehicle. Acting on a tip-off, officials tracked a lorry suspected of carrying betel logs hidden between coffee bags and wood husks from Kodagu. A team led by RFO Santosh M. Hoogar, under guidance of DCF Kirubananthan and ACF Mahadevaya, set an ambush near Azad Nagar petrol pump on the Hunsur-H.D. Kote road and intercepted the lorry. The seized logs and the vehicle were taken into custody, along with the mobile phone used in the crime.

Dangerous Trees Removed Across Bengaluru Roads Work

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Under the guidance of the Bengaluru Central Municipal Corporation Commissioner Rajendra Cholan, removal of dangerous trees and branches is being carried out across the city after recent rain and wind, officials said. In several locations including CMH Road in Indiranagar, near Ayyappa Temple on Sri Rama Temple Road, and New Thippasandra, municipal teams cleared fallen trees to ensure public safety and smooth traffic movement in the area. Weeks of heavy rain and strong winds caused several trees to weaken, prompting urgent preventive action by civic authorities to avoid accidents and restore normal urban conditions quickly officials added in statement release.

R Ashoka alleges vote bank politics over case withdrawal

BENGALURU

Opposition Leader R. Ashoka has accused the Congress government of engaging in vote bank politics by withdrawing cases against those allegedly involved in communal violence incidents in Kalaburagi. He said the decision has raised serious concerns about state security and accused the government of weakening law and order for political gains.

Ashoka alleged that cases linked to violence near Ladle Mashak Darga in Aland, attacks on police personnel and a minister's convoy, and other communal incidents have been withdrawn. He claimed that nearly 150 accused, including some associated with banned organisations, have benefited from the decision, which he described as unconstitutional. He further alleged that the Congress government is sending a wrong message that violent actions will be forgiven for electoral support.

Ashoka warned that such decisions could endanger national security and said the BJP would launch protests if the government does not reverse its stand. He also criticised welfare announcements for minority communities, alleging that the government is pursuing appeasement politics for electoral benefits. He said withdrawing cases related to farmers or Kannada activists may be different, but cases involving communal violence should not be treated lightly.

On the proposed international cricket stadium in Anekal, Ashoka alleged that the project is driven by land value speculation and commission interests. He questioned the need for another stadium when Bengaluru already has existing facilities that are underutilised for most of the year. He alleged that the project is being used as an excuse to increase land prices around the area and benefit select groups.

Ashoka alleged withdrawal of cases from Aland violence and attacks, claiming 150 accused benefited, calling it unconstitutional and politically motivated by Congress government decisions

Ashoka claimed that no local sportspersons have demanded such a stadium and said the decision appears financially motivated rather than sports oriented. He also criticised rising fuel prices and accused the state government of benefiting from increased tax revenue instead of reducing public burden. He said global oil price fluctuations are being misused for political blame games between the Centre and the state.

Ashoka further commented on political alliances and judicial respect, stating that all parties must respect court orders and avoid statements that undermine the judiciary. He concluded by calling for accountability in governance and urged the government to focus on public welfare instead of political controversies and allegations.

Academic dialogue explores lessons from historical civilization

BENGALURU

A dialogue session was organised on Saturday at the Seminar Hall, Jnana Jyothi Auditorium, Bangalore University Central College Campus, Bengaluru, on the book "The Decline of the Hindu Civilization: Lessons from the Past." The event was jointly hosted by the Department of Communication, Bangalore University, and the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University.

Author Shashi Ranjan Kumar attended the programme as the chief guest and interacted with students, faculty members, and academicians. He spoke about India's civilisational history, cultural continuity, and the importance of understanding historical developments in shaping contemporary society.

He also highlighted the role of education and intellectual engagement in preserving cultural heritage and encouraging informed public discourse.

The session witnessed the participation of several distinguished academicians and faculty members. It was presided over by Prof. Ramesh B. Guests of honour included Prof. B.K. Ravi, Prof. Jayakara Shetty M., Prof. B. Shailashree, and Prof. T.N. Thandava Gowda. The speakers and participants discussed themes related to historical awareness, cultural identity, and the relevance of civilisational studies in today's academic and social context.

Students actively engaged in the interaction, raising questions and sharing perspectives with the author and faculty members. The discussion provided an opportunity for academic exchange on the interpretation of history and its influence on present-day cultural understanding.

Overall, the event created a platform for dialogue between scholars and students on issues related to heritage, history, and intellectual inquiry.

CPI(M) criticizes governments over labour rights suppression

HUNSUR

The CPI(M) district secretary expressed anger that both state and central governments are suppressing labour rights and pushing workers into modern slavery during a World Labour Day programme organised by CITU in the town.

He said that hard-won rights of workers are being weakened and urged organised struggle against such policies. He added that workers are not getting fair wages for their hard work and governments are encouraging long hours of exploitation. CITU taluk convener Basavaraju Kalkunike said earlier workers followed

eight hours of work, eight hours of leisure and eight hours of rest, but now labour rules are being changed to force 12-hour shifts, affecting workers' lives severely and continuously.

Karnataka Prana Raitha Sangha district president Chikkanna Gowda, taluk president M C Chandrashekhar, gram panchayat employees' leader Lokesh, and Dasoha Employees Sangha president Manjala Rajamma also spoke. Earlier, workers carried red flags through main streets from Constitution Circle shouting slogans like Long live worker unity, CITU zindabad, No amendment to labour laws and No anti-worker policies. The march was led by several union leaders and activists.

They said the movement will continue until labour rights are protected and anti-worker policies are withdrawn by governments at both levels. Participants demanded fair wages, safe working hours and respect for workers' dignity across all sectors in the state. Leaders urged unity to strengthen ongoing struggle further across region.

SBI employees hold candlelight march in Kalaburagi city

KALABURAGI

Demanding the fulfilment of various long-pending demands, members of the State Bank employees' union organised a candlelight march in the city.

The protest began from the State Bank of India office at Station Bazaar and proceeded through Mohan Lodge Road, culminating at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Circle. Employees participated carrying candles and placards, raising slogans urging authorities to address their grievances. Union leaders said the protest was organised as part of the call given by the All India State Bank of India Staff Federation (AISBISF), which has issued a strike notice for May 25 and 26. The candle march was intended as a precursor to the upcoming industrial action.

Krishnamurthy said 23 crore sanctioned for Madabal Gram Panchayat development and 10 crore additional funds sought

Magadi leaders push development works across villages

MAGADI

Bamul Director H. N. Ashoka said MLA H. C. Balakrishna has envisioned social justice through development works benefiting all communities in Magadi taluk. He spoke after performing pooja for concrete road and drainage works worth about fifty lakh rupees in Mangallu village of the taluk. He said a detailed list of village development works has been prepared and basic facilities like roads, drainage and drinking water are being provided in phases. He added that several infrastructure projects worth thousands of crores are underway across the region to strengthen rural development and improve living conditions.

Ashoka also said that a land dispute involving 44 acres and 33 guntas of the State Farmers Association is under legal hearing in the High Court. He mentioned that a complaint has been filed at Kamakshipura police station regarding continued activity by three individuals during the ongoing dispute. He further said there may be a shortage in urea supply due to global conflict conditions and assured that steps will be taken to prevent fertilizer shortage. He said he will request the Agriculture Minister to ensure smooth supply of seeds and fertilizers to farmers in the taluk.

Bangalore Dairy President D. K. Suresh said milk procurement and marketing have been fully digitized to improve efficiency and transparency in operations. He said he personally inspects dairy operations regularly and highlighted that the institution handles procurement of nearly eighteen lakh litres of milk daily. He also indicated that discussions are underway regarding possible revision of milk prices in the future to support milk producers.

Congress Block President K. Krishnamurthy said Rs 23 crore has been sanctioned for village development under various government schemes in Madabal Gram Panchayat. He said additional funding of ten crore rupees has been sought for further infrastructure development in the region. He listed ongoing works including roads, temple access roads, village development works and other infrastructure projects funded by different government departments.

Leaders warned contractors and engineers to maintain high quality standards and ensure durability of roads for at least twenty to twenty five years.

Officials said public money must be used responsibly and villagers should monitor works to ensure transparency and prevent poor construction practices.

Several local leaders, gram panchayat members, contractors and officials attended the event and reviewed progress of ongoing development works in the region.

Officials inspect NREGA desilting work site

HORTI

Officials have instructed that more labourers should be engaged in desilting works under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) to ensure timely completion of ongoing projects.

The direction was issued by Rural Employment Assistant Director Sanjay Khadgekar during an inspection of a desilting project at the Sawalasang lake under Koluragi Gram Panchayat limits near Horti.

During the visit, officials reviewed the progress of the lake desilting work and interacted with labourers engaged at the site.

CITU announces protest on May 30 over workers wages

VIRAJPET

The district unit of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU) has announced a protest march and siege of the Deputy Commissioner's office on May 30, demanding an increase in the minimum wage for workers to ₹36,000 per month. The decision was announced during a district-level organisational workshop held at Nellihudikeri near Virajpet.

Speaking at the event, CITU state vice-president Dharmesh said the country is facing serious economic and social challenges due to the policies of the Central government. He alleged that the manufacturing sector has weakened significantly, resulting in rising unemployment and increasing inequality across the country.

Dharmesh criticised the concentration of wealth among a few industrialists while educated youth struggle to find secure jobs and fair salaries. He pointed out that many engineering graduates are unable to earn even modest incomes despite completing higher education. He also claimed that corruption and policy failures have affected opportunities for young people seeking employment.

The labour leader further alleged that the four labour codes introduced by the government are anti-worker in nature and would weaken labour rights by restricting the ability of workers to organise protests and strikes.

Diverse mango varieties attract visitors in Madikeri festival

MADIKERI

A colourful display of rare and popular mango varieties attracted large crowds at the Mango and Jackfruit Festival that began in Madikeri. Organised jointly by the district administration, Zilla Panchayat, Horticulture Department and HOPCOMS, the three-day festival showcased nearly 15 different varieties of mangoes along with several types of jackfruit and exotic fruits.

Visitors were delighted to taste and explore mango varieties such as Sakkareguthi, Rumani, Imam Pasand, Dasheri and Mithayi Mango, which stood out for their aroma, flavour and appearance. The festival venue at the local HOPCOMS premises turned into a miniature world of mangoes, drawing fruit lovers from different parts of the district.

Apart from mangoes, stalls displaying different varieties of jackfruit also attracted attention. Many visitors enjoyed tasting both fruits before purchasing them to take home. Traders from places including Ramanagara and Kanakapura brought a wide range of fruits from their regions for sale at the fair.

Organisers said the mangoes displayed at the festival were naturally ripened and cultivated using organic methods without chemical treatment. Officials from the Horticulture Department and traders highlighted the importance of promoting naturally grown fruits among consumers.

The festival also featured exotic fruits such as mangosteen, rambutan and butter fruit, along with saplings of different fruit varieties. Farmers and gardening enthusiasts were given an opportunity to buy quality saplings for cultivation.

The event was inaugurated by MLA Dr. Mantar Gowda, who tasted different varieties of mangoes and jackfruit and interacted with growers at the venue. He gathered information about the unique mango varieties and appreciated the efforts of farmers and organisers in promoting horticulture and local produce.

Several local leaders, officials and members of HOPCOMS and the Horticulture Department attended the inaugural programme.

QUICK READ

Applications invited for subsidized cattle distribution scheme

CH NEWS, Chitradurga Under the Comprehensive Development of Mine-affected Areas scheme, applications have been invited from women members of self-help groups in 187 mine-affected villages across Chitradurga, Holalkere and Hosadurga taluks for distribution of cows or buffaloes with subsidy support. Officials said 3,179 beneficiaries, including Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and General category women, will benefit from the programme. Each selected beneficiary will receive one cross-breed cow or buffalo along with a rubber mat through GPLF support. The total unit cost has been fixed at Rs.63,000. Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries will receive a 90 percent subsidy, while General category beneficiaries will get a 50 percent subsidy.

G B Mahantesh elected as district teachers association president

CH NEWS, Chitradurga G.B. Mahantesh has been elected as the district president of the Karnataka State Primary School Teachers Association in Chitradurga district. He secured a landslide victory in the district executive committee elections held across the state on Saturday. The election witnessed strong competition among candidates. Along with Mahantesh, G.T. Hanumanthappa was elected as general secretary, A.R. Ashok as district vice president and H. Shivamurthy as district treasurer. Leaders and members of various government employee and teac hers associations congratulated the newly elected office bearers and honored them during a special gathering held after the results were announced.

International stadium our gift to Bengaluru says DCM

Deputy Chief Minister said Bengaluru traffic reduction, urban development, and 2,000 crore international sports complex planned in Anekal.

BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar said the construction of an international level cricket stadium and sports complex is a major contribution of the Congress government to Bengaluru's development. He spoke at the foundation stone laying ceremony of the KHB Surya Sports Village project in Suryanagar, where an international stadium and other development works were launched on Saturday.

Shivakumar said leaders D. K. Suresh and MLA Shivanna had long envisioned the project and the government has now turned their dream into reality through official approval and foundation laying. He said development projects should benefit both farmers who gave land and young sportspersons who need better facilities to grow and succeed at national and international levels.

The Deputy Chief Minister said the government is also working to reduce Bengaluru's traffic problems and improve urban infrastructure through planned development initiatives. He added that the international sports complex in Anekal will be developed with an investment of around two thousand crore rupees as part of regional growth plans.

Shivakumar said Cauvery water supply is also being extended to the region as part of efforts to improve basic amenities and ensure complete maintenance of the entire drain network without gaps in execution.

Ramesh D S urged officials to prioritise monsoon preparedness and take preventive action in flood prone areas within the Bengaluru East City Corporation limits. He said desilting, garbage removal and weed clearing from all drains must be completed quickly to ensure smooth rainwater flow.

The Commissioner added that proper maintenance of stormwater drains is essential to avoid public inconvenience and protect residential areas during heavy rains. He warned that delays in completing monsoon related works will not be accepted and accountability will be fixed on responsible officials.

Executive Engineer Raghavendra B N and other assistant engineers accompanied the Commissioner during the inspection of ongoing civic works in the area.

nities for residents in surrounding areas. He highlighted that Anekal is an important extension of Bengaluru and not a distant area, as thousands of people travel daily for work between the region and the city. He said farmers who gave land for the project have been fairly compensated through development based agreements and will benefit from higher value returns in the future.

Shivakumar said the Housing Department and Karnataka Housing Board are implementing major reforms to provide housing and property records to the homeless and landless citizens. He praised Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan and KHB officials for planning large scale development projects that aim to provide shelter and infrastructure to needy families. He said the government is committed to fulfilling promises and ensuring development reaches all sections of society through transparent implementation of welfare and infrastructure schemes.

The Deputy Chief Minister added that such long term projects will remain a permanent contribution to Bengaluru's growth and future generations. He said leaders must focus on building roads, dreams and opportunities for people, stressing that development vision is essential for creating lasting change in society.

Demand raised for action against government doctors

DEVDURGA

Various organisations submitted a petition to MLA Smt Kariamma G Nayak condemning the behaviour of Dr RS Hulimani Gowda medical officer of Jalahalli Community Health Centre and demanding his transfer to another place.

Speaking after submitting petition Linganna Nayak Makashi taluk president of Agricultural Workers Organisation alleged that the doctor is responding only to patients who visit his private hospital while neglecting patients at government hospital and telling them to go elsewhere.

People from many villages depend on Jalahalli Community Health Centre for treatment and poor families visit in large numbers so doctors should treat everyone with respect and provide timely care.

Petition also alleged failure of police in controlling illegal liquor matka and gambling activities and demanded removal of encroachments from Valmiki Circle to Basaveshwara Circle and blacklisting of contractors responsible for poor quality CC road works and completion of Valmiki Bhavan project.

Leaders of agricultural workers organisation and other groups were present during submission of the petition and urged authorities to take immediate action and ensure better healthcare services in the village government hospital.

Officials said the memorandum will be reviewed and appropriate action will be taken as per rules after verifying the allegations raised by the organisations. They added that healthcare services at community health centres are being strengthened and complaints regarding staff behaviour will be examined seriously to ensure accountability and public trust in government hospitals across Devadurga taluk.

Commissioner reviewed Geddalahalli drainage works, noted silt inflow risk, and ordered coordinated maintenance to prevent flooding

Geddalahalli drain works must finish by may end: Ramesh

BENGALURU

Bengaluru East City Corporation Commissioner Ramesh D S has directed officials to complete the remaining 12 metre box pushing work of the Geddalahalli railway vent by the end of May. He issued the instructions during a site inspection of the railway vent and stormwater drain maintenance works at Geddalahalli Sai Layout under the corporation limits.

The Commissioner said the pending work must be completed before May 31 so that further construction activities like retaining wall work can begin without delay. He explained that once the vent work is finished, rainwater flow will improve and flooding problems in nearby residential areas can be permanently reduced.

Ramesh D S also inspected desilting and cleaning works being carried out under the Annual Maintenance Contract for stormwater drains in the Geddalahalli Rajakaluve area. He directed engineers to carry out drain cleaning on a war footing and ensure that connecting side drains from major roads are cleared properly before the monsoon. He stressed that free flow of rainwater is essential to prevent water stagnation and flooding during heavy rainfall in the coming monsoon season.

The Commissioner also reviewed works in upstream drain areas near the Sarvagna Nagar border which are linked to the Geddalahalli drainage network. He noted that silt and debris from upper regions are entering the main drain and increasing the risk of flooding in downstream residential zones. He instructed officials to coordinate with concerned depart-

Manjunath challenges DCM over Bidadi township issue

RAMANAGARA

Former MLA A. Manjunath has strongly challenged Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar, asking him to visit Bairamangala Circle and directly hear the problems of farmers instead of addressing them from secured venues. He said Shivakumar should show courage and openness by meeting protesting farmers in public and discussing the Bidadi Township issue face to face at the site of the agitation.

Speaking at a press conference in Bidadi, Manjunath alleged that farmers have been suffering for over 435 days and are still waiting for a fair hearing from the government. He accused the Deputy Chief Minister of inviting selected farmers to meetings and projecting a one sided version of support while ignoring those opposing the project.

Manjunath questioned the land acquisition process and alleged irregularities in the development of the township project and past approvals linked to earlier governments. He also responded to remarks about land ownership, saying farmers and local families have the right to hold property and should not be targeted for political reasons. He further alleged that large scale land transactions have taken place involving outsiders and claimed that land in the region has been diverted for commercial interests.

Manjunath said leaders of various farmer and Kannada organisations, along with several political representatives, have already visited the area to support protesting farmers. He questioned why the Deputy Chief Minister has not personally met the agitating farmers despite holding a key constitutional position in the state government. He also alleged discrepancies in official records related to land acquisition notifications and claimed that there is confusion over the actual approval process of the project.

Manjunath warned farmers supporting the township project to be cautious and urged them to understand the long term impact of land acquisition decisions. He further made serious allegations of irregular land conversions and claimed that fake records have been created in certain survey numbers in the project area. He said investigations are needed into alleged benami property transactions and misuse of official authority in connection with land dealings.

Manjunath questioned land acquisition, alleged township irregularities, defended farmers' ownership rights, and claimed large-scale land diversion for commercial interests involving outsiders

Manjunath alleged that the township project is being driven by financial interests rather than public welfare and demanded a transparent inquiry. He urged the government to directly engage with all stakeholders and resolve the dispute through open dialogue instead of selective meetings and political claims.

Bhovi Corporation launches free tailoring training programme

CHITRADURGA

Karnataka Bhovi Development Corporation launched a free tailoring training and sewing machine distribution programme for unemployed youth from the Bhovi community in Chitradurga on Saturday.

Corporation President Dr. M. Ramappa said women should become financially independent instead of remaining limited to household responsibilities. He said self employment can help women support their families and build confidence in society.

The programme was held at Mother Teresa Educational Institution in Balaji Layout on Challakere Road. Dr. Ramappa urged participants to take the training seriously and use the opportunity to build a better future.

He said tailoring work is useful for both women and men and can provide a stable monthly income. According to him, stitching only two blouses a day can help women earn enough money to support household expenses comfortably. Dr. Ramappa also highlighted various welfare schemes available through the Bhovi Development Corporation. These include cow farming loans, direct loans worth one lakh rupees, Ganga Kalyan Yojana, vehicle loans and financial assistance for women's groups. He said the corporation has completed ten years and is now focusing on skill development and economic empowerment of the community through practical programmes and self employment opportunities. The training programme will continue for seventy five days and participants will receive practical lessons in machine operation, cutting and stitching. Free power sewing machines will also be distributed after successful completion of the course.

Strict attendance rules have been introduced for trainees. Participants must mark biometric attendance daily and GPS based photos will be uploaded online for monitoring purposes.

Speaking at the event, Siddarameshwara Swamiji praised the corporation for encouraging self reliance among youth. District officials and community leaders also attended the programme and appreciated the initiative aimed at improving employment opportunities and empowering women from economically weaker backgrounds across the district.

Officials said the project was already successful in Mysuru and similar training programmes would soon be expanded to other districts. They encouraged young people from the Bhovi community to use government schemes wisely and create independent livelihoods instead of depending on jobs. Organisers expressed confidence that the programme would bring change.

Complete Aland Amrit 2.0 project in six months says DC

KALABURAGI

Kalaburagi District Magistrate Ikram Sharif has directed officials to complete the long pending Amrit 2.0 drinking water project in Aland within six months and warned against further delays. He issued the instructions after visiting multiple project sites in Aland town and reviewing the progress of the ongoing water supply works on Saturday.

Expressing dissatisfaction over the slow progress, the Deputy Commissioner said the project must be completed without any further extension of time. Officials informed that the project, which aims to supply clean drinking water from Amarja dam to Aland town, is still pending despite crossing the original deadline.

According to reports, around thirty percent of the work is still incomplete even after nearly two years of implementation. The project was originally scheduled to be completed between May 2024 and May 2025, but delays have pushed the timeline further.

Authorities have now been given an extended deadline of six months with a target to complete all pending works by December.

The DC inspected key project components including the water purification unit at Ashraya Colony and the jackwell construction near Amarja dam. He also reviewed progress of water tank construction on Hebli Road and pipeline works spread across different parts of the town.

Officials explained that the project includes intake wells, pump houses, footbridge structures, purification units and a large distribution network. The scheme also involves laying a 101 kilometre pipeline network and providing metered connections to nearly eleven thousand households.

The project is designed to supply 135 litres of water per person considering future population growth projections up to 2055. The total project cost has been estimated at around 86.02 crore rupees under the centrally sponsored Amrit 2.0 scheme.

The Deputy Commissioner instructed engineers and contractors to speed up work and ensure that citizens do not face drinking water shortages. He said public inconvenience caused by delays will not be tolerated and accountability will be fixed on responsible officials and agencies.

During the inspection, several officials including Assistant Commissioner, municipal officers, engineers and project staff accompanied the District Magistrate.

National health programs must reach public effectively

HOSAPETE

Deputy Director of the Kalaburagi Divisional Joint Director's Office Dr Sharanabasappa Ganajalakheda said that all national health programmes implemented by the government must effectively reach the public and urged health officers and staff to work with dedication and responsibility during a review meeting held at the District Health and Family Welfare Office in Hosapete.

He said priority should be given to the care of pregnant women and lactating mothers and instructed officials to ensure that maternal and infant mortality rates are brought down to zero through proper monitoring and timely medical support.

He also directed that vaccination programmes for children and pregnant women must be completed without delay according to fixed targets and stressed the need for strong field level supervision to improve health outcomes in the district. With the monsoon season approaching he instructed officials to take preventive measures against diseases like malaria dengue and chikungunya and ensure continuous health monitoring so that essential medicines are always available in hospitals and health centres.

Officials were also asked to ensure availability of vaccines and medicines for dog bite and snake bite cases in all taluk hospitals and primary health centres to avoid emergency shortages. He further emphasized early detection and treatment of tuberculosis in both rural and urban areas and called for intensified efforts towards leprosy eradication through awareness and screening programmes.

District Health and Family Welfare Officer Dr L R Shankar Nayak along with other senior medical officers and health department staff participated in the meeting and discussed strategies to strengthen public healthcare delivery and improve implementation of national health schemes across the district.

RDPR Office Shooting Party Leads Suspensions

RAICHUR

Action has been taken against officials and staff involved in a shooting themed party held inside the RDPR office at Lingasuguru in Raichur district. Assistant executive engineer Hanumappa Advani, FDA Ramanna Pujari and watchman Hanumantha are among those suspended after allegations of misuse of government office.

QUICK READ

Security forces defuse deadly Maoist bomb In Dantewada

CH NEWS, DANTEWADA
Security forces in Chhattisgarh foiled a major Maoist attack after recovering and destroying a five-kilogram pressure cooker bomb in Dantewada district. Acting on intelligence inputs, a joint team of district police, CRPF personnel, and the Bomb Disposal Squad launched a search operation near Hidpal village. During the operation, officials found a suspicious object hidden inside a forest area. Experts later confirmed it was an improvised explosive device planted to target security personnel and scare villagers. The bomb was safely neutralised on the spot. No injuries were reported, and further searches were carried out nearby afterward.

Overloaded tractor turns deadly near Vidisha fields

CH NEWS, VIDISHA
Two people died and around 20 others were injured after an overloaded tractor-trolley overturned on Bina Road in Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha district. The vehicle was carrying migrant labourers and children from Umaria district to nearby fields for moong harvesting. Witnesses said the speeding vehicle lost balance between Layra and Maliyakheda villages, causing panic at the spot. Villagers and police quickly began rescue work and shifted the injured to Kurwai Community Health Center. Two seriously injured women were later referred to the district hospital. Police suspect overloading and high speed caused the tragic accident.

IAF airlifts 132 stranded NCC cadets from Manipur

Special evacuation operation carried out after road travel disruptions in Manipur left cadets unable to return home following NCC flying camp

IMPHAL

The Indian Air Force (IAF) executed a swift emergency rescue operation, safely evacuating 132 National Cadet Corps (NCC) cadets from Manipur to Assam.

The emergency airlift was organized due to the volatile regional security situation and strict restrictions on road travel, which had left the young students completely stranded in Imphal.

The teenagers had traveled to the state capital to participate in the NCC North Eastern Region Flying Camp, which concluded on May 20. However, escalating tensions and blocked highways made it impossible for the group to travel home by road. To ensure their safety, the NCC Directorate coordinated closely with the Eastern Air Command to launch an immediate tactical airlift.

Using three AN-32 transport aircraft, the IAF split the group to return them home efficiently. Sixty cadets were safely flown to Jorhat, while the remaining 72 were transported to Guwahati. Officials noted that the lightning-fast mission was crucial because it allowed the students to arrive home in time to sit for their upcoming school examinations.

The successful operation brought immense comfort and relief to highly anxious parents who were worried about their children's safety. Representatives from the NCC Directorate praised the flawless teamwork, care, and national unity displayed by the military during such a challenging period.

Deeply moved by the rapid rescue, the grateful cadets sent heartfelt thank-you messages to the Defence Ministry and the IAF pilots for looking after their welfare when they needed it most.

3 arrested with Chinese weapons in Mumbai

Investigators are probing their possible links to the Lawrence Bishnoi gang and inter-state smuggling networks.

MUMBAI

In a major crackdown, the Anti-Extortion Cell of the Mumbai Crime Branch arrested three out-of-state arms suppliers.

Acting on specific intelligen ce inputs, the police caught the men red-handed near a public toilet on P.D. Mello Road, clo se to St. George Hospital. Law enforcement recovered thr ee firearms, matching magazines, and 45 live cartridges bearing 'Made in China' inscriptions.

The arrested suspects have been identified as Jashanpreet Mangal Singh and Sukhwinder Singh, both 24-year-olds from Patiala, Punjab, and Arbaz, a resident of Jhalawar, Rajasthan. Investigators revealed that all three men have extensive criminal records.

Jashanpreet and Sukhwinder had been evading law enforcement since 2022 in connection with a murder case, while Arbaz alone faces 19 prior criminal charges across different states.

Preliminary investigations suggest that the trio arrived in the city to sell illegal weapons to local gangs operating in Mumbai and nearby urban areas. Following the successful operation, a formal case was registered under the Arms Act at the M.R.A. Marg Police Station.

The Crime Branch has expanded its probe into a larger inter-state smuggling network. Detectives are heavily focusing on tracking the actual smuggling route used to bring the Chinese-marked weapons into India.

Govt rolls out guidelines for Rs 33,660 cr 'BHAVYA'

NEW DELHI

The Union Government released detailed operational guidelines for the implementation of the BHAVYA (Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna) Scheme.

The landmark initiative is designed to establish 100 investment-ready, world-class plug-and-play industrial parks across India over a six-year period spanning from FY 2026–27 to FY 2031–32.

The mega project features a total financial outlay of approximately Rs 33,660 crore and aligns with the core objectives of 'Make in India' and 'PM Gati Shakti'. Briefing the media, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal announced that the government has officially opened a tight four-month window for states to submit applications for the first phase, which will cover 50 industrial parks. The government aims to have these initial 50 hubs fully operational within the next three years.

Implementation & Eco-System Design

The primary objective of BHAVYA is to transition away from traditional manufacturing layouts toward highly advanced "ready-to-operate" industrial ecosystems. The parks will be sector-agnostic and will serve both domestic and global markets.

To ensure rapid administrative execution, projects will be managed via Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) incorporated under the Companies Act, 2013, formed between the state nodal agencies and the National Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (NICDC). These SPVs will hold full regulatory autonomy to act as planning authorities—significantly cutting down bureaucratic delays by operating a single-window clearance system aimed at issuing factory, environmental, and utility licenses within 60 days.

Furthermore, the design mandates a deep focus on sustainability, encouraging the integration of green energy, underground utility corridors, and Zero Liquid Discharge systems alongside crucial social infrastructure like worker housing, schools, and medical clinics.

Structural framework of BHAVYA

The selection process will rely on a competitive, challenge-based method to prioritize proactive, reform-oriented states. The foundational architecture of the scheme includes the following parameters:

- Phased application timeline: States are requested to submit bids for the first 20 parks within the next two months, followed by an additional 30 parks over the subsequent two months.
- Land size demarcation: A minimum of 100 acres is required for non-hilly states, while a minimum of 25 acres is permitted for hilly regions, northeastern states, Union Territories, and smaller states. The maximum capacity allows for massive parks stretching up to 1,000 acres.
- Financial assistance models: The Centre will offer financial support of up to Rs 1 crore per acre for equity-mode infrastructure development. For private landowner-led proposals backed by state governments, an assistance framework of Rs 50 lakh per acre has been established.
- External infrastructure: The scheme provides additional funding covering up to 25% of the project cost specifically for last-mile multimodal logistics connectivity.

Malviya hits back at Ghose over FCRA

NEW DELHI

A fierce political war of words has broken out between the BJP and the Trinamool Congress (TMC). BJP IT cell chief Amit Malviya launched a scathing attack on TMC Rajya Sabha MP Sagarika Ghose, accusing her of spreading blatant falsehoods regarding the central government's treatment of the Missionaries of Charity.

The heated controversy ignited after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio visited the Mother House in Kolkata, a humanitarian headquarters founded by Mother Teresa. Following his visit, Ghose took to social media to accuse the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government of sheer hypocrisy. She claimed the administration acted in an anti-Christian manner, using a proposed FCRA bill to bar the organization from receiving crucial foreign aid.

Malviya swiftly hit back, labeling Ghose a habitual disinformation peddler who is deliberately trying to tarnish India's global image. He presented hard legal facts to dismantle her claims, clarifying that the Missionaries of Charity holds an active, fully valid FCRA registration until December 31, 2026. Furthermore, he stated that the organization currently has absolutely no pending applications regarding its foreign funding status.

The BJP leader condemned Ghose's remarks as a malicious attempt to mislead the public and create a false narrative about the seizure of church assets. Escalating his criticism, Malviya declared her conduct reprehensible, arguing that as a public servant occupying a tax-funded position, she must be held strictly accountable for fabricating stories that undermine national harmony.

Following the distribution, ecstatic recruits spoke about their personal struggles, childhood aspirations, and financial relief

Modi distributes 51K appointment letters at Rozgar mela

NEW DELHI

Hundreds of newly recruited youths across Bihar, Jharkha nd, and Chhattisgarh celebrated recently after receiving official appointment letters under the 19th edition of the Rozgar Mela.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi distributed over 51,000 employment letters to candidates selected for various central government departments and public organizations.

During the virtual event, PM Modi praised the rapid technological advancement and immense power of India's youth.

Following the distribution, ecstatic recruits spoke about their personal struggles,

childhood aspirations, and financial relief. In Bihar, a candidate from Gaya expressed deep gratitude to the Prime Minister after receiving his appointment letter for the Railway Protection Special Force from MP Jitan Ram Manjhi.

Another resident, Vikas Kumar, shared his excitement about joining the Indian Railways as an Assistant Loco Pilot.Similar scenes of joy unfolded in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh, where family members joined the celebrations. One emotional recruit noted that the job fulfilled his lifelong dream of driving trains while providing long-term financial stability for his hardworking parents. In Jharkhand, successful can didates highly praised the central government for maintaining absolute transparency throu ghout the competitive recruitment process. Newly appointed railway guards and Group C staff members thanked the Ministry of Railways for opening up massive employment avenues. Launched as a flagship employment drive by the Centre, the Rozgar Mela contin ues to bridge the gap between grassroots talent and prestigious public sector careers across the country.

Ajay Rai blames AI for controversial viral video

LUCKNOW

A massive political storm has erupted in Uttar Pradesh after a video showing state Congress chief Ajay Rai making highly objectionable remarks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi went viral. Responding to the intense backlash, Rai claimed the footage was a fake, AI-generated video designed to distract from a sensitive local crime.

The controversial clip shows Rai waving to supporters while making distasteful comments. Following a complaint by BJP leader Neeraj Rawat, the police registered an FIR against Rai, outgoing secretary Brijraj, and 30 unidentified individuals. The BJP heavily criticized the Congress party, accusing them of running a "third-rate market of hatred" and calling the personal remarks against the Prime Minister completely unforgivable.

Defending himself, Rai argued that the video was circulated to suppress his advocacy for a 25-year-old Dalit woman who was allegedly tortured and gang-raped for 16 days in Mahoba while preparing for competitive exams. Rai challenged the government, stating they could file multiple cases against him as long as the victim receives justice. He emphasized that Congress workers are actively working on the ground in scorching 48-degree temperatures to support victims of crime rather than sitting at home.

Despite the legal trouble, Rai expressed strong confidence in the party's future, adding that extensive organizational strengthening is currently underway across all state assembly constituencies ahead of the 2027 Uttar Pradesh elections.

Satheesan-Modi meet likely on May 26

NEW DELHI

Kerala's newly-elected Chief Minister VD Satheesan is scheduled to hold his first official meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the national capital on May 26. This highly anticipated encounter marks a major political milestone just days after Satheesan took his oath of office.

The Chief Minister reached Delhi for crucial discussions. While the exact details of his upcoming meeting with PM Modi remain private, sources suggest they will focus on Kerala's urgent development needs, financial aid from the central govt., and key state issues that require federal support.

Cops probe vandalism at Gariahat Girl's School

KOLKATA

A group of miscreants went on a violent rampage inside a prominent girls school in south Kolkata. The shocking incident took place around early in the morning at the Kamala Chatterjee Girls' High School, prompting a swift police investigation.

According to school authorities, the vandalism specifically targeted a rented building used to conduct clas ses for the primary and secon dary sections. The cam pus security cameras captur ed clear footage of a group of youths scaling the main iron gate at dawn to gain illegal entry into the premises before systematically destro yin g school property.

Centre absorbs 90% of fertilizer costs

NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal announced that the Central Government has fully absorbed the heavy financial burden of elevated global fertiliser prices, ensuring that no extra costs are passed down to Indian farmers.

Speaking at a news briefing in the national capital, Goyal emphasized that despite severe volatility in global energy and commodity markets, largely dri ven by ongoing geopolitical ten sions and international supply disruptions, the retail prices of fertilisers for domestic farmers remain completely unchanged.

He revealed that the government is currently absorbing nearly 90% of total fertiliser costs through massive subsidies amounting to lakhs of crores. "In every respect, India has demonstrated to the world an economy that is self-confident, progressing on the path of self-reliance, and engaging with the world on equal and fair terms," the minister stated. He credited this financial resilience to 12 years of deep structural reforms, transformational initiatives, outcome-oriented strategi es executed under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Goyal's assurances come on the heels of data showing that India's advance stocking and agricultural logistics are operating at peak efficiency. Fo llowing a recent supply crun ch, the government swi ftly scaled up domestic production and ove rseas imports, adding approximately 97 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) to the national pool.

BIG HEALTHCARE SHIFT

Bengal merges state health scheme with Centre's

KOLKATA

Beneficiaries of West Bengal's 'Swasthya Sathi' health insurance scheme will automatically be enrolled in the Central government's 'Ayushman Bharat' scheme starting this July.

Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari made the milestone announcement, marking a major shift in the state's healthcare policy.

The previous administration had blocked the central sche me to keep its own state program exclusive. Following the recent change in government, the administration decided to align West Bengal with other states implementing the national program.

Adhikari stated that roughly six crore citizens currently enrolled in the state system will seamlessly transfer over and receive their new Ayushman Bharat cards in July.

Furthermore, the updated coverage will extend to migratory workers from Bengal who are earning livelihoods outside state borders.

Financially, the transition is already moving forward. Out of a total central sanction of Rs 2,103 crore under the National Health Mission, West Bengal received its first installment of Rs 500 crore on Saturday.

The center has also earmarked an additional Rs 976 crore specifically for the local Ayushman Bharat rollout.

To boost infrastructure, the government plans to set up new medical colleges in four districts that currently lack them, while also initiating talks for a new AIIMS facility in North Bengal.

Additionally, the state will target youth health by launching a major cervical cancer vaccination drive on May 30, distributing over seven lakh antidotes to young girls aged 14 and 15.

QUICK READ

Official reviews preparations for Char Dham Yatra

DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Chief Secretary Anand Bardhan reviewed preparations for the ongoing Char Dham Yatra and directed officials to ensure smooth and safe arrangements for pilgrims. He asked district administrations to maintain strong coordination with temple boards and other agencies to avoid crowding and delays at the four shrines. He also suggested night darshan arrangements if pilgrim numbers rise. Officials were instructed to keep holding areas ready at safer, lower altitudes and ensure basic facilities for devotees. The Chief Secretary stressed health checks for elderly and unwell pilgrims and asked for advance monsoon and evacuation planning.

Shirdi gains new identity as defence manufacturing hub

SHIRDI

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan said Shirdi will now be recognised not only for spirituality but also for defence manufacturing and technological innovation. He made the remarks while inaugurating the NIBE Defence Manufacturing Complex in Maharashtra. General Chauhan said modern warfare now depends on artificial intelligence, drones, robotics, cyber systems, and advanced technologies. He added that India's defence production and exports have reached record levels, showing growing strength in the sector. The CDS also encouraged students and young innovators to support the vision of a developed India. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh attended the ceremony.

Child murder case shocks Tamil Nadu, 2 held

COIMBATORE

Tamil Nadu police arrested two men in connection with the abduction and murder of a 10-year-old girl in Coimbatore. Police said the child went missing while playing outside her home and was later found dead. Investigators identified the main accused as Karthi, a neighbour known to the victim's family. During questioning, he allegedly confessed to luring, assaulting, and murdering the child. Another accused, Mohan, was arrested for helping him. Both were remanded to judicial custody. Authorities added charges under the POCSO Act. The incident triggered protests demanding strict punishment and immediate justice.

Punjab ready for soaring summer temperatures: Min

Punjab Health Minister Balbir Singh announced comprehensive medical preparedness and strict public advisories to combat the state's severe heatwave

CHANDIGARH

As temperatures soar across the state, Punjab Health Minister Balbir Singh announced that the health department is fully prepared to handle the extreme weather.

The state has launched proactive measures to prevent and manage heat-related illnesses like heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

To protect citizens, all local health authorities have been ordered to set up dedicated Heat Stroke Management Units in hospitals and health centers. These special wards are equipped with active cooling tools like ice packs, cold IV fluids, and plenty of essential medicines. Ambulances have also been upgraded to provide cooling treatment to patients while rushing them to the hospital.

The Health Minister urged the public, especially children and the elderly, to stay alert. The health department has issued a safety guide advising people to drink water every 20 minutes, even if they do

not feel thirsty. Traditional drinks like lassi, lemon water, and ORS are highly recommended, while tea, coffee, and alcohol should be avoided.Citizens are advised to wear loose cotton clothes, use umbrellas, and stay indoors between 12 PM and 3 PM. The advisory also reminds people to eat light meals, consume water-rich fruits like watermelon, and never leave children or pets inside parked cars.

Emergency medical care must be sought immediately if anyone experiences a high fever, confusion, or fainting. Minister Singh reassured everyone that while medical teams are well-trained and ready, public awareness remains the best shield against the dangerous summer heat.

Kerala BJP MLA hits out at Oppn for supporting CJP

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

'The online movement is a deliberate attempt by specific forces to create chaos in the country and destabilize the government'

Kerala BJP president Rajeev Chandrasekhar launched a scathing attack against the viral social media trend known as the 'Cockroach Janta Party' (CJP).

He alleged that the online movement is a deliberate attempt by specific forces to create chaos and destabilize Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

Speaking with media reporters, Chandrasekhar strongly criticized major opposition parties, including the Congress, AAP, and Trinamool Congress, for supporting this trending digital campaign. He described their sudden show of support for young citizens as a cruel joke, arguing that these traditional political parties have historically done absolutely nothing meaningful to empower India's youth and children.

The senior BJP leader compared the online phenomenon to a recent student uprising in neighboring Nepal. He suggested that as India successfully transitions from a struggling economy into a powerful global nation, various hostile foreign entities are working to halt its steady progress. He explicitly pointed toward neighboring countries like Pakistan and China, claiming they use domestic actors to orchestrate cross-border digital influence operations.

The controversial trend originally erupted after Chief Justice of India Surya Kant reportedly used the term "cockroaches" to criticize individuals utilizing fraudulent law degrees. The comment quickly mutated into a massive satirical online movement, gaining millions of digital followers within days. Chandrasekhar emphasized that while social media has now become a dangerous playground for geopolitical battles, the ruling government remains highly vigilant against any coordinated online attempts to weaken the nation's political stability.

Healthcare workers in Chhattisgarh run innovative night camps under a government initiative to deliver medical care to remote tribal villages.

DOCS RUN NIGHT CAMPS IN TRIBAL VILLAGES

SUKMA

Brave healthcare workers are overcoming difficult terrains and hidden explosive threats to bring medical aid directly to remote forest villages in Chhattisgarh. Under the "Mukhyamantri Swasth Bastar Abhiyan," medical teams are now running unique night camps to ensure tribal families receive crucial healthcare.

Local authorities noticed that most villagers spend their daytime deep in the forests collecting tendu leaves or working on farms.

Because homes were empty during the day, doctors found it nearly impossible to conduct routine screenings.

To solve this problem, the district administration adapted by moving medical checkups to the nighttime.

This creative campaign, inspired by Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai, has already achieved massive success. Sukma Collector Amit Kumar announced that health teams have successfully screened nearly 70 percent of the local population. Over two lakh villagers have undergone medical checkups, with thousands referred for advanced treatments.

When necessary, dedicated medical teams even stay in the forest villages overnight to complete their checkups. This massive effort has vastly improved local health data. Local residents expressed immense relief, noting that they no longer have to travel long kilometers for basic illnesses like a cough or fever. Free ambulances are also provided for emergencies.

Villagers expressed deep gratitude toward the Chief Minister for this thoughtful initiative. By shifting schedules to fit the daily lives of tribal communities, the government has successfully bridged the gap between remote villages and essential medical care.

Hyderabad police launch smart AI plaint app

HYDERABAD

In a major technological leap, the Hyderabad City Police launched "AI-CopWriter." This is India's very first artificial intelligence-powered mobile application designed to instantly record, transcribe, and translate public complaints across ten major Indian languages in real time.

Hyderabad Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar officially unveiled the innovative app at the local command center in Banjara Hills.

The primary goal of this modern tool is to streamline internal documentation, speed up report writing, and completely eliminate difficult language barriers for citizens seeking immediate justice.

TVK govt prioritizes merit over caste: Minister

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

Tamil Nadu State Minister Ramesh proudly declared that the newly formed Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam government remains deeply committed to secularism and social justice. He firmly asserted that political appointments and electoral success across the state are based entirely on merit, rather than caste lines.

According to reports, Minister Ramesh credited the party's historic victory to the inclusive leadership of Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay. He emphasized that neither he nor Deputy Speaker Ravi Shankar won their legislative seats because of their caste.

UP villagers walk 10 km for drinking water

PRAYAGRAJ

Residents of the Shankargarh block in Uttar Pradesh are facing a punishing survival battle. Caught in a severe heatwave with temperatures soaring past 40 degrees Celsius, locals are dealing with a double blow, they have absolutely no electricity and no drinking water.

The situation has become so desperate that families are forced to walk up to 10 kilometers every day just to collect a single bucket of water. Local residents expressed deep anger, stating that this severe crisis has been neglected for many years. About 150 people living in the immediate pocket feel completely abandoned by the system, as their daily pleas for basic utilities continue to go unanswered.

Responding to the growing public outcry, Additional District Magistrate Vinita Singh stated that the local administration has launched an immediate review of the region. Officials have been ordered to send emergency water tankers to the affected villages without any delay. The administration has also directed teams to quickly repair broken hand pumps and explore deep reboring options to tap into underground water sources.

This localized crisis comes at a time when Northern, Central, and Western India are trapped in a brutal, multi-day summer heatwave. The India Meteorological Department has warned that these extreme conditions will likely continue for the next six days, affecting several states including Delhi, Haryana, and Madhya Pradesh. While the regional government rushes to deploy emergency countermeasures, suffering villagers are demanding permanent solutions to their age-old water and power struggles.

Ludhiana cops issue urgent cyber fraud alert

LUDHIANA

Ludhiana cops warned citizens against viral 'Cockroach Janta Party' phishing scam, where malicious links allow hackers to drain bank accounts and steal identities

Ludhiana Police have issued an urgent alert warning citizens about a dangerous new cyber fraud. Scammers are now using the bizarre name of the "Cockroach Janta Party" to trick unsuspecting people into clicking malicious links that drain their bank accounts.

According to police officials, cybercriminals are spreading these phishing links rapidly across various social media and messaging platforms.

The scam takes advantage of the current viral internet trend surrounding this fictional party name. The deceptive messages falsely promise users that they can join the group by simply clicking the provided web link.

However, police officer Amarinder Singh explained that the moment a curious user clicks, hackers instantly gain full control of their mobile device. This digital trap allows scammers to steal highly sensitive banking details, wipe out savings, or even fraudulently take out large loans in the victim's name.

To counter this growing threat, the Ludhiana Police have released a special awareness video online. The video visually demonstrates how a single careless click out of pure curiosity can lead to devastating financial loss.

Officer Singh urged the public to stay calm and rational, advising them never to click on emotional or suspicious messages on WhatsApp.

He reminded citizens that if they unfortunately fall victim to this digital trap, they must immediately dial the national cybercrime helpline number at 1930. Law enforcement is actively tracking these innovative digital thugs and requests residents to report any suspicious links right away.

Engineers assemble second TBM near Mumbai coast

MUMBAI

TThe ambitious Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor achieved a major milestone as engineers successfully lowered the massive cutterhead of the second Tunnel Boring Machine at Ghansoli near Mumbai.

This critical step officially completes the primary assembly phase of the giant machine's main shield.

This second heavy machine will soon begin its underground journey from Ghansoli, drilling forward towards Vikhroli. Interestingly, the cutterhead for the first machine was safely lowered at Vikhroli earlier this week. Both giant drillers will now undergo final technical assembly and safety trials before launching their initial underground digging drive in the first week of July 2026.

The enormous cutterhead measures 13.6 meters in diameter and weighs approximately 350 tonnes. It is uniquely engineered to excavate a single, massive tunnel that is spacious enough to accommodate.

LADAKH GREENLIT FOR FIRST GEOTHERMAL PROJECT

LEH

Ladakh is marching toward a major green energy reform. Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has officially approved a five-year extension of an agreement with the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation to build India's very first commercial geothermal power project.

The original three-way pact signed in 2021 had expired earlier this year in February. ONGC requested an extension because extreme freezing weather conditions and challenging mountain terrains left a significant amount of field construction work unfinished. Recognizing the deep environmental value of this clean energy initiative, the Lieutenant Governor granted the extension to help complete scientific exploration.

The project is located in the scenic Puga Valley at an altitude of over 14,000 feet. Under this renewed agreement, ONGC will establish a 1-megawatt pilot power plant. The energy company plans to deepen its current test well to 1,000 meters.

Jharkhand CM orders water stations amid heatwave

RANCHI

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren issued strict orders to local officials and district administrations to arrange clean drinking water for the public as a severe heatwave sweeps across the state.

According to reports, the Chief Minister instructed all local police chiefs, district heads, and village representatives to set up dedicated water stations right outside government buildings and at major public intersections. He emphasized that clear signs must be displayed at these booths so that tired walkers and everyday citizens can easily find quick relief.

Addressing the rising water crisis, Soren stated that it is the collective responsibility of the government to ensure that no village, small neighborhood, or local street suffers from a shortage of water.

NEW GOVT, NEW RULES

Bengal trims Bakrid break to 1 day from 2

KOLKATA

The West Bengal government officially revised its public holiday schedule for the upcoming Eid al-Adha, commonly known as Bakrid.

According to the fresh state order, May 28 has now been declared a public holiday, while previously announced dates have been canceled.

Initially, the state administration had earmarked May 26 and May 27 as public holidays to mark the holy occasion. However, after receiving updated information regarding the actual moon sighting and celebration schedule, the Governor modified the original directive.

Under the new notification, May 26 and May 27 will now be observed as regular working days for all government offices, educational institutions, and public establishments.

Instead May 28, will serve as the official public holiday under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

Eid al-Adha, famously

known as the Festival of Sacrifice, holds deep spiritual value for millions.

It honors the profound willingness of Prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son in complete obedience to God.

The sacred day emphasizes the core human values of sharing, charity, and deep empathy for the less fortunate.

The festival traditionally begins with special morning prayers, followed by the ritual sacrifice of animals.

Families then distribute the meat and traditional sweet dishes among relatives, neighbors, and poor people.

The vibrant festival is widely celebrated with people visiting each other's homes, exchanging warm greetings, and enjoying delicious festive meals together.

QUICK READ

Pakistan sheltering terrorists after JeM commander killed

London

Pakistan faced fresh allegations of harbouring terrorists after suspected Jaish-e-Mohammed commander Hamza Burhan was killed in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Political activist Amjad Ayub Mirza claimed the incident exposed Islamabad's long-standing links with terror outfits operating against India. Burhan was reportedly linked to the 2019 Pulwama terror attack that killed over 40 CRPF personnel. Critics said Pakistan continues providing safe havens to extremist groups despite repeated international scrutiny. The development has again intensified debate over cross-border terrorism and Pakistan's alleged support for banned militant organisations active in Jammu and Kashmir.

UNICEF warns of rising violence against children in Bangladesh

Dhaka

UNICEF has expressed serious concern over a recent surge in violent crimes against children in Bangladesh, including cases of rape and killings, and has called for urgent action to strengthen protection systems and accountability mechanisms across the country.

Rana Flowers, UNICEF Representative in Bangladesh

CHANGE OF NAME

I, PERCIVAL ANTONY EDWARD S/o. Edward Carlyle Antony R/a M3, Block 1, Splendour Part Apartments, VBC Extension Cross, 1B, Horamavu, Bengaluru-560 043 My minor Son name have changed from **SAMUEL RUFUS** to **SAMUEL RUFUS PERCIVAL** Hereby declare that both the names **SAMUEL RUFUS** & **SAMUEL RUFUS PERCIVAL** refer to one and the same person i.e., my Son only vide affidavit dated 20-05-2026 Sworn before Notary Y. R. Chandrasekar, Bangalore

ANNOUNCEMENT

I, DEEPTHI. J D/o Jagadish Kumar R. residing at No.628, 7th Cross, North Anikethana Road, Kuvempunagar, Mysore- 570023. That my name is DEEPTHI. J, but in my Aadhaar Record my name mentioned as **DEEPTHI JAGADISH.** To clarify the discrepancy, I have sworn to an affidavit before Notary Kumarswamy S. Mysore dated 22-05-2026 declaring my name as **DEEPTHI. J.** Mysore, dated: 24-05-2026 **Sd/- DEEPTHI. J**

AFFIDAVIT

I, **Amreen Banu,** aged about 38 years, wife of Nayazulla Khan, residing at # 3392, 28th Ward, Idgha Mohalla, Ijoor, Ramanagara Town-562159, Bengaluru South District declare that my birth name is **AMREEN BANU** and same name is recorded in all offical documents. But in my husband's passport, my name is mentioned as **AMREENA BANU.** Both **AMREEN BANU** and **AMREENA BANU** refer to same person i.e., myself. I have executed an affidavit to clarify the variation in my name for the purpose of my husband's passport application. I have sworn to an affidavit before Notary Public Vinod Kumar S, Ramanagara. Dated 22-05-2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

On behalf of my client Mr. Syed Shahzada, s/ o. Abdul Latheef, Educationalist, SNM school road, Andersonpet post, KGF (Mobile NO. 9449837137) I am issuing this public notice as follows;
Whereas on 15/4/2026 what my client was travelling in his vehicle at Andersonpet, he lost the following original documents;
1. Original registered sale certificate dated 22/5/ 2004which is registered before SRO, Bangarpet vide Document No. BPT-I-00530/2004-05, Dated 24/05/2004,
2. Original registered sale deed dated 28/03/2006 which is registered before SRO, Bangarpet vide Document No. BPT-I-03620/2005-06 Dated 28/03/2006.
3. Original registered sale deed dated 28/06/2006 which is registered before SRO, Bangarpet vide Document No. BPT-I-01166/2006-07 Dated 28/06/2006.
4. Original registered sale deed dated 07/07 / 2006 which is registered before S.RO, Bangarpet vide Document No. BPT-I-013L14j2006-07 Dated 12/07/2006.
5. Original registered. sale deed dated 23/12/2009 which is registered before SRO, Bangarpet vide Document No. BPT-I-06752/2009-10 Dated 23/12/2009.
6. Original registered sale deed dated 19/03/2011 which is registered before SRO, Bangarpet vide Document No. BPT-I-07677/2010-11 Dated 19/03/2011.
It is hereby informed to general public that if any person finds above the said documents, please hand over the same to my above said client or to us at following address. If any person misuses said documents in any manner, my client will take appropriate actions against such persons and in such event they will render themselves liable for all the costs and consequences of such proceedings.
AMARESH & ASSOCIATES
AMARESHA
A.CHETHAN
ADVOCATES &. CONSULTANTS
2nd Floor, Karnataka Bank Building, BANGARPET-563114
Mobile: 9844595885, 9845675822

NAME CHANGE

I, SUDHINDRA PRAKASH SHINDE, resident of No 56, ISTAARTA, 14th Main, 15th Cross, Judicial Layout, GKVK Post, Bengaluru 560065, have changed my Minor Son's name from **HRIDAAN SAI to HRIDAAN SAI SHINDE**, vide affidavit dated: 23.05.2026, before Notary P.N.NAGESHA, Bengaluru.

NAME CHANGE

I, **SAMEENA,** W/o Abdul Munaf, resident of Flat No 8, 15th Cross Road, Opp Family Super Market, Lakkasandra, Bengaluru -560030, have changed my name to **SAMEENA ABDUL MUNAF,** Vide Affidavit Dated: 22.05.2026 before notary R BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

Taslima Nasreen urges action over alleged attacks on Hindus

Taslima Nasreen urges Bangladesh leadership to protect Hindus amid alleged rising communal violence and minority insecurity concerns.

DHAKA

Exiled Bangladeshi author and human rights activist Taslima Nasreen has expressed serious concern over reported attacks on Hindu communities in Bangladesh and urged authorities to ensure the safety of minorities and uphold equal rights for all citizens.

In a post on social media platform X, Nasreen addressed Bangladesh's political leadership, calling for strong action against what she described as rising "mob violence" and religious extremism. She alleged that incidents of violence, land grabbing, and intimidation against Hindus were increasing in different parts of the country.

Nasreen referred to recent reported cases involving Hindu individuals accused of making statements deemed offensive to religious sentiments. She claimed that in some instances, victims were arrested while attackers were not held accountable, raising concerns about fairness and justice.

Citing specific examples, she mentioned incidents involving schoolteacher Gouranga Sarkar in Satkhira and others in different districts who were allegedly targeted after accusations of "blasphemy." She said such allegations were often used to incite violence and social exclusion.

She argued that these incidents are not isolated but reflect a broader pattern of discrimination and insecurity faced by minority communities. According to her, fear-driven actions, including protests by extremist groups, have worsened the situation for affected individuals and families.

Nasreen also questioned whether sufficient legal action has been taken against those inciting communal tensions and carrying out attacks. She warned that continued inaction could encourage further violence and undermine freedom of expression in the country.

She stressed that freedom of speech is a fundamental democratic principle and said its weakening poses a threat to social harmony. Nasreen urged the state to take decisive steps to prevent further escalation and protect vulnerable communities.

Her remarks come amid ongoing debates about minority rights and religious tensions in Bangladesh, with rights groups repeatedly calling for stronger safeguards and impartial law enforcement to address communal violence and ensure justice for all citizens.

UN chief condemns failed nuclear talks as missed safety chance

NEW YORK

UN Secretary-General António Guterres has criticised the collapse of recent nuclear non-proliferation negotiations, calling it a "missed opportunity to make the world safer" amid rising global tensions and weakening arms control frameworks.

According to reports, the stalled talks involved key nuclear-armed and non-nuclear states attempting to revive commitments under global disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. The discussions ultimately failed to produce a consensus document, reflecting deep divisions over verification mechanisms, strategic deterrence policies, and regional security concerns.

UNICEF warns of rising violence against children in Bangladesh

DHAKA

UNICEF has expressed serious concern over a recent surge in violent crimes against children in Bangladesh, including cases of rape and killings, and has called for urgent action to strengthen protection systems and accountability mechanisms across the country.

Rana Flowers, UNICEF Representative in Bangladesh, said the increasing reports of brutality against children in 2026 highlight systemic gaps in prevention, reporting, and institutional safeguards. She stressed that violence against women and children must be urgently addressed and that "the culture of impunity enjoyed by perpetrators must end."

UNICEF noted that children continue to face risks in multiple environments, including homes, schools, religious institutions, workplaces, and communities. The agency emphasized the need for stronger child-friendly policing, improved justice systems, and better psychosocial support services for survivors and their families.

The organisation also urged authorities to reinforce community-level protection networks and ensure that cases of abuse are properly reported and investigated. It highlighted the importance of coordination between law enforcement, social services, and educational institutions to prevent further incidents.

Flowers also called on the public and media to act responsibly when reporting such cases.

Pakistan faces severe water crisis amid mismanagement

Poor water management, shrinking reservoirs, rapid urbanisation and climate pressures are pushing Pakistan's Rawalpindi and Islamabad towards a severe water crisis.

RAWALPINDI

Pakistan's twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are heading towards a major water crisis due to decades of poor water management, rapid urban expansion, shrinking reservoirs, and climate-related pressures. Experts warn that worsening shortages could severely affect millions of residents in the coming months.

The crisis has been aggravated by declining water levels in key reservoirs such as Simly and Khanpur dams, which supply drinking water to the federal capital and surrounding regions. Rapid population growth, unchecked construction, and inadequate planning have sharply increased water demand in both cities.

Analysts say Pakistan's broader water management failures are central to the problem. The country has one of the world's lowest water storage capacities and loses massive quantities of water annually because of outdated irrigation systems, leakages, poor recycling infrastructure, and delayed dam projects. Experts estimate that Pakistan wastes significant amounts of freshwater flowing unused into the Arabian Sea every year.

Urban infrastructure in Rawalpindi and Islamabad is also under severe strain. Aging drainage systems, groundwater depletion, untreated wastewater, and poor flood management have worsened conditions. Areas around the Lai Nullah basin remain highly vulnerable to seasonal flooding and water contamination during monsoon rains.

Authorities have proposed several long-term solutions, including the Ghazi Barotha water supply project and the Dadocha Dam project, aimed at improving water availability for the twin cities. However, repeated delays, rising costs, and governance challenges have slowed progress.

Climate change has added further pressure on Pakistan's already stressed water resources. Irregular rainfall, glacier melt, drought conditions, and rising temperatures are making water supplies increasingly unpredictable. Experts warn that unless urgent reforms are implemented, Pakistan could face even deeper economic, agricultural, and public health crises linked to water scarcity.

Pakistan intensified diplomatic efforts as Army chief Asim Munir met Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Tehran

MILITARY DIPLOMACY AIMS REDUCE WEST ASIA CONFLICT

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Army chief Asim Munir held high-level talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi in Tehran to discuss diplomatic efforts aimed at ending the ongoing West Asia conflict and preventing further escalation in the region. Iranian officials said the meeting focused on strengthening peace, stability, and regional security amid continuing tensions involving the US, Iran, and Israel.

Munir arrived in Tehran as part of Pakistan's ongoing mediation initiative between Washington and Tehran. He was welcomed by Iran's Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni, while Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi was already in Tehran holding discussions with senior Iranian officials. Pakistan's military described the visit as a continuation of efforts to facilitate a possible peace agreement between the US and Iran.

Iranian media reported that the discussions between Munir and Araghchi continued late into the night, highlighting the urgency of diplomatic engagement. The talks reportedly covered measures to reduce regional tensions, restore stability in West Asia, and address disruptions caused by the conflict, especially around the strategically crucial Strait of Hormuz, through which a major portion of global energy supplies pass.

Pakistan has increasingly positioned itself as a mediator in the crisis, leveraging its ties with both Tehran and Washington. Islamabad had earlier hosted negotiations between representatives of the two countries, though no final breakthrough was achieved. Major sticking points remain Iran's nuclear programme, sanctions relief, and security concerns linked to the Strait of Hormuz. Analysts believe continued diplomatic engagement by Pakistan may help maintain the fragile ceasefire that has been in place since April.

IRGC-linked operative held in Ivanka Trump assassination plot

WASHINGTON

US authorities have accused an Iraqi national linked to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) of plotting to assassinate Ivanka Trump in retaliation for the 2020 killing of Iranian commander Qasem Soleimani. According to reports, the suspect, Mohammad Baqer Saad Dawood Al-Saadi, was arrested in Turkey on May 15 and later extradited to the United States.

Investigators allege that Al-Saadi, 32, operated on behalf of the Iran-backed militia Kata'ib Hezbollah and maintained close ties with the IRGC. Officials claim he possessed a blueprint of Ivanka Trump's Florida residence and posted online threats directed at Americans, warning that security agencies would not be able to protect them.

Former Iraqi diplomat Entifadh Qanbar reportedly stated that the suspect repeatedly spoke about targeting Ivanka Trump as revenge against the Trump family. Researcher Elizabeth Tsurkov also alleged that Al-Saadi had connections with both Qasem Soleimani and his successor, Esmail Qaani.

US investigators further accused Al-Saadi of involvement in multiple attacks and attempted attacks across Europe and North America, including shootings, stabbings, firebombings, and assaults on Jewish sites and American diplomatic facilities. Authorities believe he used an Iraqi service passport and a travel agency as cover to coordinate activities and move internationally.

The suspect is currently being held in solitary confinement at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn while investigations continue.

The developments come amid heightened tensions between Washington and Tehran. Reports suggest the Donald Trump administration is considering fresh military strikes against Iran, although no final decision has been announced.

SpaceX launches Starship V3 twelfth test mission

TEXAS

SpaceX conducted the twelfth major test flight of its Starship V3 system from its Starbase facility in Texas, marking another step in the company's effort to develop a fully reusable deep-space launch vehicle. The launch took place after a brief weather delay and proceeded through early ascent phases as planned, according to initial mission updates.

The Starship system, developed by SpaceX, is designed for long-duration missions including future lunar and Mars exploration. The V3 iteration includes design refinements aimed at improving structural efficiency, engine reliability, and thermal protection during reentry. Engineers monitored key milestones such as stage separation, booster return, and spacecraft trajectory stability during the test sequence.

This twelfth integrated flight test is part of a broader campaign to validate full reusability, a core objective of the Starship program.

GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS BRICS

BRICS meeting maintains core agenda

MOSCOW

The recent BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in New Delhi under India's 2026 chairship successfully maintained focus on its core agenda despite ongoing geopolitical tensions, particularly the conflict in West Asia, according to a report by the Politeia Research Foundation (PRF).

The meeting, held on May 14–15, brought together member countries including India, Brazil, Russia, China, and South Africa, alongside newer members such as Iran and the UAE. While deep divisions emerged over the Gulf conflict, the bloc managed to avoid breakdown in dialogue and instead issued a Chair's Statement and Outcome Document rather than a joint communique.

India's Sherpa for BRICS and Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, Sudhakar Dalela, said the document reflected broad consensus across most issues, despite differences on regional conflicts. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar acknowledged that members held "differing views" on the situation in West Asia but emphasized the importance of continued engagement.

According to the report, discussions at the meeting were marked by tensions, with some members exchanging strong views on the ongoing war involving Israel, the US, and Iran. However, there was agreement on the need for diplomatic solutions, respect for sovereignty, and protection of civilian lives.

The bloc also converged on several global governance priorities, including maritime security, safe trade routes, disaster management, food security, and Digital Public Infrastructure. The document also highlighted support for reforms in global institutions such as the United Nations Security Council.

QUICK READ

Global oil prices climb as Iran indicates scepticism of agreement with US

Tehran

Global oil prices climbed on the last day of trading week after Iran cast doubt on market hopes for a near term agreement with the United States. Brent crude rose 0.94 per cent to $103.5 per barrel, while US benchmark WTI gained 0.26 per cent to $96.60 a barrel, reversing part of Thursday's selloff losses that had pushed both benchmarks to their lowest in nearly two weeks. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson said Tehran could not say an agreement with Washington was close, according to state linked Tasnim news agency. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said there were some good signs, while stressing that any Iranian attempt to restrict movement through the Strait of Hormuz would remain a red line.

No overall shortage of petrol, diesel in country: Indian Oil Corporation

New Delhi

There is no overall shortage of petrol and diesel in the country and outages reported at some retail outlets are highly localised and temporary, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) said on Saturday. These small outages are caused by regional demand-supply mismatches and shifting sales patterns, the IOC said in a statement. The company is closely monitoring the situation and taking adequate measures to address these isolated situations and ensure uninterrupted fuel supplies to consumers. We wish to reassure customers and the general public that there is no overall shortage of petrol and diesel in the country.

SEBI probes 7-member family for Rs 20 crore gains

Mumbai

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has found seven individuals from a single family allegedly using social media platforms to influence retail investors and make illegal profit by taking buy positions ahead of public stock recommendations. An interim enforcement order named seven family members, using channels such as Telegram, WhatsApp and X to circulate tips for stock market manipulation. They took positions in scrips listed in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) platform before the calls were widely shared and have collectively made prima facie wrongful gains of Rs 20.25 crores, the market regulator said.

India optimistic on 2026 Canada trade deal

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will visit Canada from May 25 to 27 along with a delegation of nearly 150 Indian industry leaders in a major effort to strengthen bilateral economic and trade relations between the two countries.

NEW DELHI

Speaking at a news briefing on Saturday, Piyush Goyal said India is optimistic about signing a comprehensive free trade agreement with Canada. The proposed agreement is expected to cover key sectors including energy security and critical minerals, which are increasingly important for industrial development and clean energy transitions around the world.

The minister stated that discussions during the visit would also focus on expanding collaboration in advanced technology, food processing, sustainable energy, and investment opportunities. According to Goyal, Canadian pension funds and companies have already invested nearly 100 billion dollars in India, reflecting strong confidence in the Indian economy and its long-term growth potential.

At present, nearly 600 Canadian companies are operating in India across various sectors. Both governments are now working towards increasing that number to around 1,000 in the coming years. India and Canada also continue to maintain strong partnerships in agriculture, education, energy, and technology.

Goyal's visit will begin with official engagements in Ottawa on May 25, followed by a two-day programme in Toronto from May 26 to 27. The visit follows the mandate provided by the Prime Ministers of India and Canada during Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's visit to India in March 2026. The objective is to inject renewed momentum into bilateral cooperation across trade, investment, innovation, and people-to-people exchanges.

A key focus of the visit will be the advancement of negotiations for the India–Canada Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. The Terms of Reference for the agreement were signed during Prime Minister Carney's India visit earlier this year. The first round of negotiations was held virtually in March, while the second round concluded on May 8.

Another round of negotiations is scheduled to take place in Ottawa from May 25 to 29 during Goyal's visit. Both countries are aiming for an early conclusion of a balanced and mutually beneficial agreement by the end of 2026. India and Canada also share a long-term goal of expanding bilateral trade to 70 billion Canadian dollars by 2030, marking a major step forward in their economic partnership.

Centre slashes petrol and diesel excise duties

The Central government has defended its fuel taxation policy, stating that recent reductions in special additional excise duty on petrol and diesel helped shield consumers from rising global crude oil prices and resulted in a significant revenue sacrifice for the exchequer.

NEW DELHI

Sources said that the reduction in special additional excise duty on petrol and diesel announced on March 27, 2026 imposed an estimated cost of nearly Rs 30,000 crore on the central exchequer during the current financial year. The move came amid disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, which had raised concerns over global crude oil supply and price volatility.

Following the reduction, excise duty on petrol was brought down to three rupees per litre, while diesel excise duty was effectively reduced to zero. According to government sources, the intention behind the measure was to prevent a sharp rise in retail fuel prices and protect consumers from international market fluctuations.

The Congress party has repeatedly argued that petrol prices have risen sharply under the current government, pointing out that petrol cost approximately Rs 71 per litre in May 2014 compared to nearly Rs 98 per litre today. The party has described the increase as evidence of excessive taxation on fuel.However, sources said the comparison overlooks the financial structure that existed during the earlier period. According to them, the fuel prices in 2014 did not reflect the actual cost of supplying petrol because the then United Progressive Alliance government had issued oil bonds worth nearly Rs 1.34 lakh crore to public sector oil marketing companies between 2005 and 2010 instead of fully passing on the price burden to consumers.

Sources claimed that these oil bonds effectively deferred the financial burden to future governments and taxpayers. The present government, they said, has been repaying both the principal and the interest on those bonds over the past several years.According to official figures cited by sources, the government redeemed approximately Rs 10,000 crore worth of oil bonds in the financial year 2021–22, Rs 31,150 crore in 2023–24, Rs 52,860 crore in 2024–25, and Rs 36,913 crore in 2025–26. In addition, cumulative interest payments have also amounted to several thousand crores.Sources further stated that the current government has adopted a different mechanism to manage fuel price shocks. Instead of issuing bonds or postponing liabilities, it directly reduced excise duties whenever crude oil prices surged, including during the global energy disruptions in 2022 and again in 2026.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday distributed more than 51,000 appointment letters to newly recruited candidates across various government departments and organisations during the 19th edition of the Rozgar Mela held at 47 locations across the country.

PM MODI ADDRESSES NATIONWIDE ROZGAR MELA EVENT

VADODARA

The Rozgar Mela programme was organised simultaneously at multiple locations nationwide as part of the Central government's ongoing employment generation initiative. Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined the event virtually and addressed the newly appointed candidates, encouraging them to contribute actively to the country's development journey.

In Vadodara, the Rozgar Mela event was organised in the presence of Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil, who attended as the chief guest. During the programme, appointment letters were distributed to selected candidates across several sectors, including the Indian Railways, Postal Department, Banking services, and Healthcare departments.

The event created a celebratory atmosphere among the newly selected candidates and their families, many of whom viewed the appointments as an important milestone that would provide financial security and career stability.

Sanjay Singh, one of the beneficiaries who received an appointment letter, expressed his joy after being selected for government service. Speaking after the event, he said he was extremely happy to receive the job opportunity and thanked Prime Minister Modi for the initiative.

Another newly appointed candidate described the occasion as a memorable moment for both himself and his family. He said receiving the appointment letter filled him with pride and happiness and marked the beginning of a new chapter in his life.

Meanwhile, a similar programme was held in Bengaluru, where Union Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Shobha Karandlaje participated in the Rozgar Mela event. During the ceremony, 84 candidates received appointment letters for various government positions.

Before the distribution process, Prime Minister Modi addressed the new appointees through video conferencing. Several beneficiaries in Bengaluru said the Prime Minister's speech inspired and motivated them as they prepared to begin their professional careers in public service.

One of the selected candidates in Bengaluru said he felt grateful to receive the opportunity and added that his parents were proud of his achievement. Another beneficiary, Kavya, who was selected as a junior engineer in the Indian Railways, expressed excitement after receiving her appointment letter. She said she felt fortunate to have secured the position and was happy to hear the Prime Minister's address during the event.

India achieves milestone with advanced fast breeder reactor

NEW DELHI

India has entered the elite league of nations with advanced nuclear reactor technology after the 500 MW Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu, achieved criticality. This marks the first time the indigenously developed reactor has attained a controlled and self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction, a crucial milestone in nuclear power generation.

The achievement is considered a major boost to India's long-term energy security and clean energy ambitions.

APO meeting focuses on AI-driven growth

NEW DELHI

The Governing Body Meeting of intergovernmental body Asian Productivity Organization concluded here after three days of deliberations, reviewing Vision 2030 roadmap and institutional performance measures, an official statement said on Saturday.

The meeting hosted by the National Productivity Council under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) -- reviewed priorities and informed member economies about GAIA (Genuine AI Action) for AI driven productivity enhancement and modernisation of training systems.

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal highlighted India's productivity-led growth, digital public infrastructure, manufacturing and logistics reforms, MSME empowerment, sustainability initiatives and regional cooperation.

The plenary sessions deliberated on several important agenda items concerning the future direction and governance of the APO.

Discussions included adoption of the Annual Report of the Secretary-General, FY25 financial report, appointment of auditors, recommendations of the APO Vision 2030 Steering Committee and the APO preliminary budget for the 2027–28 biennium.

Further governance reforms, progress reports on regional productivity initiatives and measures for strengthening institutional performance and compliance were also discussed.

Member economies reaffirmed commitment toward strengthening cooperation in areas such as digital transformation, sustainable development, innovation, capacity building and productivity-led growth, the statement from the Ministry of Commerce & Industry said.

APO Awards for productivity advocates and technical experts were presented along with NPC Special Recognition Awards in recognition of outstanding contributions to productivity enhancement and organisational excellence.

The Asian Productivity Organization established the APO Accreditation Body (APO-AB) to assess and accredit Certification Bodies for Productivity Specialists among APO member economies.

So far, 13 APO member economies, including India, have received certification.

During the event, the APO-AB Accreditation Certificate was presented to the National Productivity Organization Certification Body of Cambodia.

The successful hosting of the event reaffirmed India's commitment to advancing productivity, strengthening regional cooperation and fostering sustainable socio-economic development across the Asia-Pacific region, the statement noted.

India, UAE deepen strategic economic partnership

DUBAI

Agreements signed between India and the United Arab Emirates during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visits deepen strategic economic partnership across energy storage, long term fuel supplies, defence cooperation and artificial intelligence, a report has said.

The report from India Narrative said the agreement builds India's energy resilience, maritime security, digital ecosystems, and emerging artificial intelligence capabilities.

It includes a $5 billion investment commitment through the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) of India and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) and an arrangement to store up to 30 million barrels of crude oil possibly in Fujairah as part of India's strategic petroleum reserves.

At the domestic level, $5 billion investment commitment facilitates long-term capital accumulation in critical sectors that require sustained and patient investment.

Strategically, it enhances the participation of Gulf sovereign wealth in India's economic transformation and development trajectory, thereby positioning the UAE as an important stakeholder in India's economic stability, infrastructure expansion, and market growth, the report said.

Analysts said the crude storage agreement possibly holding Indian strategic oil in Fujairah outside the Strait of Hormuz reduces chances of supply disruption and strengthens India's buffer against supply shocks improving national security.

Both countries also signed a $3 billion LNG deal under which ADNOC Gas would supply LNG to India's Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) over a period of ten years which could further be expanded.

Fuel prices vary sharply across political lines

NEW DELHI

The cumulative petrol and diesel revision of just under Rs 5 a litre in three days this month is the smallest material upward movement of any major economy outside the directly subsidising Gulf producers, and the states that tax fuel most heavily are governed by the political opposition, according to data.

For example, states with the highest pump prices concentrate in the Congress-ruled and INDIA-bloc south (Telangana, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu) and in a single NDA-allied outlier (Andhra Pradesh, where the TDP state government levies an exceptionally high VAT plus per-litre addition).

States with the lowest pump prices concentrate in the BJP-ruled north and west: Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Goa, Assam.

PROBE FOR SCAM

Pralhad Joshi orders probe into booking sites

NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Pralhad Joshi on Saturday directed the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Central Consumer Protection Authority to investigate alleged excessive cancellation charges imposed by online travel and ticket booking platforms, including Agoda.

In a post shared on social media platform X, Pralhad Joshi said the investigation would examine whether online ticket booking platforms were imposing cancellation charges beyond what airlines actually charge or what consumers are informed about at the time of booking. The minister stated that similar practices by other online booking platforms operating in India would also come under scrutiny.

Joshi said he had instructed the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Central Consumer Protection Authority to conduct a detailed investigation into the matter. According to him, the government is committed to protecting consumer interests and ensuring fairness in digital transactions.

The minister said that practices involving hidden or inflated cancellation charges undermine consumer trust and violate the principle of transparency in online commerce. He added that if such actions are found to be unfair or misleading, they could amount to unfair trade practices under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

He further stated that the Central Consumer Protection Authority would take necessary steps, including class action measures wherever required, to safeguard consumers and ensure that companies comply with fair business standards.

The issue gained attention after a Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha National Secretary highlighted a major discrepancy in cancellation charges on social media. In his post, the leader claimed he had booked an Akasa Air ticket through Agoda but mistakenly selected Navi Mumbai instead of Mumbai while making the reservation.

IndiGo issues Delhi travel advisory amid thunderstorm, rain forecast

NEW DELHI

IndiGo on Saturday issued a travel advisory for passengers travelling to and from Delhi amid forecasts of thunderstorms and rain in the national capital, warning that flight departures and arrivals could be impacted due to adverse weather conditions.

Taking to social media platform X, the airline said weather conditions over Delhi may temporarily affect flight operations, even as airport and airline teams were making preparations in advance to minimise disruptions.

With thunderstorms and rain expected to pass over Delhi, departures and arrivals may be impacted. While our teams are preparing well in advance to keep things running smoothly, the weather may slow things down a touch, IndiGo said on the social media platform.

Moreover, the airline advised passengers to check their flight status through its website or mobile application before leaving for the airport.

Despite heavy defeat, RCB clinch top spot: Andy Flower

Despite a 55-run loss to SRH, RCB topped the points table to secure a direct Qualifier 1 spot

HYDERABAD

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) faced a heavy 55-run defeat against Sunrisers Hyderabad in their last match, yet they successfully finished at the top of the IPL 2026 points table. Chasing a massive target of 255, RCB only managed to score 200/4. However, this total was enough to keep them ahead of Gujarat Titans and SRH on net run rate, booking their direct spot in Qualifier 1.

RCB head coach Andy Flower explained that the team faced a tricky situation during the match. They had to choose between risking everything to chase the giant total or securing enough runs to lock in the top spot. Flower praised Venkatesh Iyer, who opened the batting and smashed a quick 44 off 19 balls, and captain Rajat Patidar, who scored a fine half-century. The coach highly appreciated Iyer's patience and professionalism for delivering a match-saving performance after waiting weeks on the bench.

On the other side, SRH posted a mammoth 255/4, thanks to explosive batting from Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan, and Heinrich Klaasen. SRH coach Daniel Vettori admitted the pitch behaved exactly as they expected when they chose to bat first. He noted that RCB's dropped catches further helped his team post an above-par total. Vettori also praised his openers for attacking early on, which sealed the victory.

Despite the loss, RCB will now face Gujarat Titans in Qualifier 1 on May 26. Meanwhile, a confident SRH moves on to play the fourth-placed team in the Eliminator match on May 27.

Patidar credits SRH bowlers after RCB defeat

HYDERABAD

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) captain Rajat Patidar credited the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) bowling attack for their disciplined performance following RCB's 55-run defeat. Despite the loss, the defending champions maintained their top spot on the IPL 2026 points table, securing a direct path to Qualifier 1 against Gujarat Titans. Patidar acknowledged that SRH's top five batters completely dominated the first innings, power-hitting their way to a massive total of 255/4. Half-centuries from Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma, and Heinrich Klaasen set a daunting target. While chasing such a mammoth score on a favorable batting pitch was difficult, Patidar highlighted that SRH's tactical bowling made the task even harder. He noted that the opposition bowlers executed their slow bouncers and slow yorkers perfectly, which gripped the surface and restricted RCB's scoring opportunities.

Rayudu lauds Ishan Kishan's IPL growth

NEW DELHI

Former India batter Ambati Rayudu has lauded Ishan Kishan's maturity and growth following his match-winning performance in the IPL 2026. Kishan smashed a brilliant 79-run knock to guide Sunrisers Hyderabad to a crucial victory against Royal Challengers Bengaluru, earning the Player of the Match award.

Rayudu pointed out that Kishan has successfully transitioned into a modern cricket superstar. Reflecting on the wicketkeeper-batter's early days, Rayudu noted that starting his career with Mumbai Indians meant competing against legendary stars, which brought immense pressure. He emphasized that handling such intense franchise expectations is often difficult for young players, who struggle to find a balance and learn to switch their focus on and off.

According to Rayudu, Kishan learned these mental skills the hard way, resulting in vastly improved discipline. His shot selection has notably become much better, choosing the right moments to attack rather than making rash decisions. Rayudu strongly credited Kishan's stint as the captain of the Jharkhand domestic team for this massive transformation, stating that the leadership role gave him immense clarity about his own batting approach.

With Kishan consistently delivering fearless performances at the top of the order, Sunrisers Hyderabad is reaping the benefits of his matured mindset. His ability to anchor the innings while maintaining a high strike rate has turned him into a lethal asset for his franchise.

Harmanpreet leads India to UK for WC

MUMBAI

The Indian women's cricket team has departed Mumbai for the United Kingdom to participate in a bilateral series followed by the ICC Women's T20 World Cup. The mega tournament, hosted by England and Wales, is scheduled to begin on June 12.

The Indian women's cricket team has departed for the UK, playing England before launching their T20 World Cup campaign against Pakistan on June 14.

Led by Captain Harmanpreet Kaur, the squad will first play a three-match T20I series against England from May 28 to June 2. This series will serve as crucial preparation for both teams before the 12-team global tournament kicks off. Following this, India will play two official warm-up matches against the West Indies and England starting June 6.

India finds itself in a challenging Group B alongside defending champions Australia, South Africa, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and the Netherlands. The Women in Blue will launch their official World Cup campaign with a high-stakes clash against arch-rivals Pakistan on June 14. They will then face the Netherlands on June 17, South Africa on June 21, and Bangladesh on June 25. Their final and toughest group-stage match will be against Australia at the historic Lord's Cricket Ground on June 28.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) finalized the 15-member squad earlier this month. The balanced team includes star players like Vice-Captain Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, and all-rounder Deepti Sharma. Young talents like Shreyanka Patil and Bharti Fulmali have also made the cut, giving India a strong blend of youth and experience as they chase their maiden T20 World Cup trophy.

Vettori applauds Hyderabad's fantastic IPL 2026 journey

HYDERABAD

Sunrisers Hyderabad head coach Daniel Vettori praised his squad for a magnificent league campaign after a commanding 55-run victory over Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Batting first, Hyderabad posted a monumental 255/4, powered by explosive half-centuries from Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma, and Heinrich Klaasen. In response, RCB was restricted to 200/4 despite fighting knocks from Rajat Patidar and Venkatesh Iyer.

With this final victory, Hyderabad finished the group stage with 18 points from 14 matches, securing nine wins. However, they narrowly missed a top-two finish due to net run rate.

RCB leads the table with a net run rate of +0.783, followed closely by Gujarat Titans at +0.695, leaving SRH in third place with +0.524. Consequently, Hyderabad must now take the longer route through the Eliminator match to reach the grand finale.

Vettori expressed immense satisfaction during the post-match conference, highlighting the team's incredible turnaround. Sunrisers Hyderabad had endured a dismal start to their season, losing three of their opening four matches. However, they rebounded exceptionally well with five consecutive victories to storm back into playoff contention.

Vettori stated that winning nine matches in such a competitive tournament is a fantastic achievement, even if they missed out on the top spots by a small margin.

Punjab's Gurnoor Brar picked for Afghanistan series

MOHALI

The family of Punjab pacer Gurnoor Brar expressed immense pride and emotion following the youngster's maiden call-up to the Indian national cricket team. The 25-year-old, 6-foot-5-inch fast bowler has been selected for both the Test and ODI squads for India's upcoming home series against Afghanistan.

Reacting to the big news, Gurnoor's mother, Manwinder Kaur Brar, expressed her sincere gratitude to the BCCI and the national selectors for recognizing her son's talent. She recalled that Gurnoor decided to pursue sports professionally after finishing tenth grade at Ryan International School in Chandigarh. Meanwhile, his father, Sukhvir Singh Brar, a Punjab Police ASI and a former national-level basketball player, revealed that he initially wanted his tall son to play basketball. However, Gurnoor chose cricket instead, a decision his father fully supported.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India announced the squads for the one-off Test starting June 6, followed by a three-match ODI series from June 14 to June 20. Young batter Shubman Gill will lead the Indian team in both formats. The selectors decided to rest veterans like Jasprit Bumrah and Ravindra Jadeja, opening doors for uncapped domestic performers.

Two wins away from dream, says Pandya

HYDERABAD

Despite a 55-run defeat against Sunrisers Hyderabad in their final league match, defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru finished at the top of the IPL 2026 points table. Accumulating 18 points with a superior net run rate, RCB successfully secured their direct spot in Qualifier 1.

Reflecting on the achievement, RCB all-rounder Krunal Pandya stated that finishing on top was the reward for two and a half months of hard work. Pandya, who contributed a solid 41 runs and dismissed dangerous batter Heinrich Klaasen, emphasized that the team is now just two steps away from lifting the golden trophy they had manifested since day one.

The high-scoring match featured key milestones, including captain Rajat Patidar hitting his fourth half-century of the season. Additionally, Virat Kohli extended his world record to 211 fifty-plus partnerships in T20 cricket.

Earlier in the chase, Venkatesh Iyer provided a fiery start by smashing 44 runs off just 19 balls. For SRH, veteran bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar maintained his grip on the Purple Cap, leading the tournament with 24 wickets.

RCB head coach Andy Flower praised his team's remarkable consistency across 14 matches in a highly competitive ten-team league. Squad member Devdutt Padikkal also stressed the importance of starting fresh and maintaining this momentum into the high-pressure knockout stage.

Kohli urges Choudhary to prioritize game-finishing

NEW DELHI

Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) breakout batter Mukul Choudhary has shared valuable advice he received from cricket legend Virat Kohli during the ongoing IPL 2026 season. Kohli urged the young talent to prioritize the rare skill of finishing games over simply hitting big sixes. Choudhary has grabbed headlines this season with his composure under pressure, especially after single-handedly chasing down a tough target against Kolkata Knight Riders. Recalling their meeting, the youngster revealed that the former India captain had watched his match-winning performance against KKR closely. Kohli emphasized that in modern T20 cricket, almost every young batter possesses the power to clear the boundaries easily. However, the real test of a player's quality lies in successfully navigating difficult run chases.

According to Choudhary, the Royal Challengers Bengaluru stalwart explained that anyone can smash a boundary when there is no scoreboard pressure. The true challenge surfaces when a team is chasing 170 or 180, wickets are tumbling rapidly at the other end, and the required run rate is continuously climbing. Kohli advised him that learning to remain calm, control the innings, and anchor a chase under intense pressure is what truly separates ordinary players from legends.

The 21-year-old LSG wicketkeeper-batter admitted that this inspiring conversation has left a deeply profound impact on his mental approach to the sport.

Sehwag hails SRH's explosive signature style

NEW DELHI

Former India opener Virender Sehwag praised Sunrisers Hyderabad's explosive batting at home following their 55-run victory against Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Batting first, SRH posted a massive 255/4 in Hyderabad, thanks to brilliant half-centuries from Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma, and Heinrich Klaasen. In response, RCB was restricted to 200/4.

Sehwag noted that setting giant scores on flat home tracks has become Hyderabad's signature style. By consistently scoring above 230, they create immense scoreboard pressure that suffocates chasing teams. Against RCB, this huge total made the chase difficult from the first over. Although Bengaluru started aggressively, losing quick wickets right after the powerplay caused the required run rate to climb rapidly, handing complete control to SRH.

The legendary batter also discussed the selection dilemma facing RCB due to Venkatesh Iyer's excellent form. Iyer, who smashed a quick 44 off 19 balls against Hyderabad and previously scored 73 against Punjab, has proven his worth at the top order. With Phil Salt returning from injury, Sehwag advised RCB management against dropping the in-form Iyer. Instead, he suggested replacing struggling wicketkeeper Jitesh Sharma with Salt to keep the batting lineup aggressive.

With the crucial IPL 2026 playoffs approaching, Hyderabad's unmatched batting dominance at home makes them a terrifying opponent. Meanwhile, RCB will need to solve their selection puzzles quickly to bounce back in the upcoming knockout matches.

Kohli snubs Travis Head after fiery clash

MUMBAI

Former India cricketer Irfan Pathan stated that Virat Kohli brings a fierce, Australian-style intensity to cricket following his heated on-field exchange with Travis Head. The incident occurred during the high-stakes IPL 2026 match between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Royal Challengers Bengaluru. The tension escalated further after the game when Kohli visibly skipped shaking hands with Head.

During RCB's run chase, an animated Kohli was seen swapping words with the Australian left-hander. Speaking on the broadcast, Pathan explained that Kohli thrives on high-energy, emotional cricket. He revealed that Kohli was actually challenging Head to come on and bowl a few deliveries instead of resting on the bench as an impact substitute. Pathan dismissed the drama as normal banter, noting that such fiery exchanges are completely natural when two top teams fight for playoff spots. However, the post-match greetings caught everyone's attention. As the squads lined up for the customary handshakes, Kohli shook hands with SRH captain Pat Cummins and Abhishek Sharma but completely ignored Head's extended hand, walking straight past him.

In the match, Hyderabad completely dominated by posting a mammoth 255/4, thanks to brutal half-centuries from Ishan Kishan, Abhishek Sharma, and Heinrich Klaasen.

Coach Mike Hesson plans Pakistan ODI makeover

Mike Hesson is rebuilding Pakistan's ODI squad with young talent ahead of a crucial series against visiting Australia

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's cricket team is undergoing a major makeover. Newly appointed head coach Mike Hesson has revealed a fresh vision to rebuild the One-Day International (ODI) squad with a heavy focus on young talent. With the next ICC Men's Cricket World Cup just 18 months away, Hesson aims to create a deeper and more balanced team.

Instead of relying only on famous veteran players, the coaching staff wants to test fresh faces. To start this process, Hesson recently ran an intensive two-week training camp. This camp allowed coaches to see how rising stars matched up against seasoned players and to find weak spots in the lineup.

The upcoming home ODI series against a powerful Australian team will be the first big test for this experimental 16-member squad. Because key batsmen like Fakhar Zaman and Saim Ayub are currently unavailable, younger players will get a golden opportunity to prove their worth on the big stage.

However, Hesson warned that Australia will be hunting for revenge after losing a T20 series to Pakistan earlier this year. He noted that ODI cricket is one of Australia's biggest strengths and they will bring a highly motivated, elite squad.

The coach asked passionate Pakistani cricket fans to stay calm and supportive during this transition phase. He reminded everyone that young athletes need time to build confidence and adapt to the intense pressure of international cricket. Growth takes patience, but Hesson believes this strategy will give Pakistan its strongest possible team for the World Cup.

Pranavi shines in Morocco Golf Opener

RABAT

India's rising golf star, Pranavi Urs, made a brilliant start at the Lalla Meryem Cup in Morocco. The 23-year-old fired a confident three-under-par 70 in the opening round, placing her in a tie for second. She sits just two shots behind Australia's Kelsey Bennett, who leads the tournament after shooting a superb five-under 68.

Pranavi showed great maturity on the Ladies European Tour. Starting her day on the back nine, she sank an early birdie on the 11th hole. Her momentum truly shifted on the front nine, where she carded three consecutive birdies on the first three holes. Despite a lone bogey on the fourth, she closed with steady pars to secure her spot near the top. Pranavi is hunting for her breakthrough international title after previously making history by winning a mixed professional event in Mumbai against male golfers.

Leader Bennett mixed seven birdies with two bogeys to claim the sole lead. Meanwhile, three other players Ayako Uehara, Shannon Tan, and Hannah Screen, shot bogey-free rounds to join Pranavi in the massive second-place tie.

It was a tough day for the other Indian golfers in the field. Avani Prashanth and Diksha Dagar both struggled, shooting two-over 75s to end the day tied for 61st place.

United Captain Fernandes wins League Player Award

LONDON

Manchester United captain Bruno Fernandes has been named the Premier League Player of the Season for the first time. The Portuguese midfielder enjoyed an incredible campaign, acting as the driving force behind United's resurgence and helping the club secure a vital third-place finish for Champions League qualification.

The 31-year-old maestro scored eight goals and provided an astonishing 20 assists in 37 appearances. His latest assist against Nottingham Forest allowed him to equal the historic single-season assist record held by legendary figures Kevin De Bruyne and Thierry Henry. Fernandes can break this all-time record on Sunday during United's final match against Aston Villa.

He has already shattered club records, surpassing David Beckham's Manchester United milestone of 15 assists from the 1999-2000 season. Fernandes was a creative machine this year, carving out 132 chances, 43 more than his closest rival, Liverpool's Dominik Szoboszlai.

This prestigious award caps off a trophy-heavy individual week for the captain. He was recently voted the Football Writers' Association Footballer of the Year, becoming the first United player to win it since Wayne Rooney in 2010. He also equalled Cristiano Ronaldo's record of winning six Player of the Month awards.

Fernandes topped an elite eight-man shortlist that featured stars like Erling Haaland and Declan Rice. By winning, he becomes the first Manchester United player to take home the Premier League's top individual honor since defender Nemanja Vidic achieved the feat back in the 2010-11 season.

Ferrari's Hamilton clinches fifth for Canadian sprint

MONTREAL

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton credited a dramatic change in his preparation routine for securing his best Formula 1 qualifying performance of the year at the Canadian Grand Prix. The Ferrari driver clinched fifth place for Saturday's sprint race at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve.

Ahead of the weekend, Hamilton decided to skip Ferrari's simulator sessions entirely. Instead, he chose to focus on rigorous physical training and deep data analysis alongside his engineers. The gamble paid off instantly, as Hamilton comfortably outqualified his teammate, Charles Leclerc, for the first time since the Chinese Grand Prix.

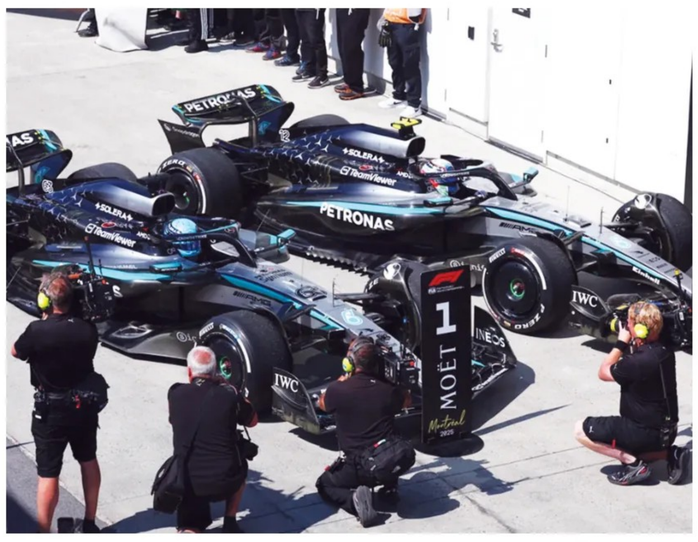
Hamilton expressed immense satisfaction with the vehicle's setup, which featured a mechanical balance the team had never tried before. He noted that the car felt fantastic from practice through the early qualifying knockout rounds. Although rivals Mercedes and McLaren ultimately found extra speed in the final session to lock out the front rows, the British veteran was delighted to be back in the podium fight.

In stark contrast, Leclerc endured a frustrating day, qualifying sixth. The Monegasque driver revealed he is severely struggling with his car's braking system, which left him feeling highly uncomfortable entering the corners. Leclerc praised Hamilton's superior weekend pace but warned that he faces a very long, difficult race unless engineers can fix his braking issues before the sprint begins.

Mercedes dominates with Canadian sprint front row

MONTREAL

George Russell secured a crucial pole position for the Canadian Grand Prix sprint race, leading a dominant front-row lockout for Mercedes. His teenage teammate and current championship leader, Kimi Antonelli, qualified second at Montreal's Circuit Gilles Villeneuve.



Russell, the pre-season title favorite, is eager to close a 20-point championship gap behind the 19-year-old Italian sensation, who has won the last three races. After a tough weekend in Miami, Russell expressed great relief, stating he never doubted his abilities and felt everything finally clicked together.

Antonelli finished just 0.068 seconds behind Russell despite making a mistake earlier in the session. He noted that Mercedes brought a new car upgrade that seems to have given the team a competitive edge, though the balance still requires fine-tuning.

McLaren locked out the second row, with reigning world champion Lando Norris qualifying third and Oscar Piastri taking fourth. Norris admitted the result was a pleasant surprise after the team struggled with car confidence during morning practice. Ferrari duo Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc will start fifth and sixth. Meanwhile, Red Bull's Max Verstappen finished a disappointing seventh.

The session faced multiple disruptions. Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso crashed early on, causing a delay for barrier repairs.

Additionally, Alex Albon missed qualifying after crashing into a groundhog, while Liam Lawson suffered mechanical failure.

J&K's Mohammad Yasser clinches Asian Gold

RAJOURI

Fourteen-year-old boxer Mohammad Yasser received a hero's welcome in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district.

Yasser made history by winning a gold medal in the 58kg category at the Under-15 Asian Boxing Championship in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, becoming the first boxer from the region to achieve this feat.

Huge crowds of locals, sports lovers, and well-wishers gathered to celebrate Yasser and his coach, Ishtiyaq Malik. The young champion expressed deep gratitude to the community, stating he hopes their continued support will help him win more international medals for Jammu and Kashmir and India in the future. Coach Malik noted that boxing had rarely received attention in the area before, which usually favors cricket. He praised the overwhelming public turnout, comparing the grand reception to one fit for an Olympic medalist.

Malik added that people across the Pir Panjal region are immensely proud to see a local child shine on a global stage.

Malik credited the government's Khelo India initiative for playing a vital role in Yasser's success.

The sports program originally brought the boxer and coach together, while also providing essential training kits, guidance, and physical counseling. This structured support significantly boosted Yasser's strength and performance, helping him secure the historic victory.

CM Dhami flags off Niti Xtreme Run

DEHRADUN

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami officially flagged off the 'Niti Xtreme Ultra Countdown Run' from his official camp office.

Organised by the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board, the high-altitude event aims to promote adventure sports, local culture, and tourism across the scenic state.

Addressing the gathered athletes, Chief Minister Dhami praised the participants for their exceptional dedication, courage, and patriotic spirit. He emphasized that the grueling marathon is far more than a standard athletic competition, describing it instead as a powerful movement designed to inspire new energy, fresh opportunities, and self-belief among the local youth.

Dhami noted that racing through the remote, rugged, and highly challenging terrain of the Niti Valley requires a special kind of resilience. He explained that the race serves as an intense test of mental strength, willpower, and patience rather than just a showcase of physical endurance. He commended the runners for possessing an indomitable spirit as strong as the Himalayas.

The Chief Minister also declared the young athletes to be the official brand ambassadors for the state's rich culture and tourism sector. He stated that their participation beautifully highlights Uttarakhand's potential for globally recognized adventure tourism.

Dhami extended his heartfelt congratulations to all the competitors, praising them as spirited individuals who are determined to propel the sacred 'Devbhumi' region forward into a prosperous future.

Record 558 players set for Otters Squash

MUMBAI

The highly anticipated Otters Club Squash Tournament 2026 is ready to return in grand fashion. Scheduled to run from May 25 to May 30 at the prestigious Otters Club in Bandra, this year's edition promises to be the biggest and most exciting chapter in the event's history.

A massive fleet of 558 players will compete across 16 intense categories. Competitors are traveling from various cities across India to participate in the six-day event, which features specialized divisions for men, women, boys, and girls. The tournament serves as a premier showcase for the country's rapidly growing squash talent, bringing together seasoned professionals and ambitious youngsters.

The corporate sector has also thrown its weight behind the event. Sindoor Mittal, Vice Chairperson of Avaada Group, expressed pride in partnering with the tournament. She emphasized that sports act as a powerful platform to build character, discipline, and resilience in the next generation, helping shape a better future for local communities.

Otters Club President Niraj Shirgaokar highlighted the tournament's rich legacy of nurturing young athletes and fostering a deep love for squash across India. He noted that the event provides a vital platform for rising stars to advance their skills and gain national exposure.

With record-breaking participation numbers, the 2026 tournament is poised to be a landmark moment for Indian sports, offering fans six days of high-quality, fierce competition as players battle for top honors.

PWL stars ready for Asian Wrestling showdown

NEW DELHI

India's rising mat stars are headed to Vietnam. Several young athletes from the Pro Wrestling League (PWL) 2026 are geared up to represent the country at the Under-17 and Under-23 Asian Wrestling Championships, taking place in Da Nang from May 23 to May 31.

Four standout performers from the recent PWL season have made the Indian squad, proving the league's vital role in developing grassroots talent. In the Men's Under-23 Freestyle division, reigning Asian champion Chandermohan of the Punjab Royals will fight in the 79kg category. He is joined by Sachin Mor of the Haryana Thunders, who will compete in the 86kg class after helping his franchise win the PWL title.

The Women's Under-23 team features two powerful Haryana Thunders teammates. Neha, a former Under-17 Asian gold medalist, will wrestle in the 59kg category. Meanwhile, heavy-hitter Kajal will compete in the 76kg division. Kajal enters the tournament with a massive reputation as a reigning Under-20 and Under-17 World Champion.

Wrestling experts credit the PWL for this youth boom.

The franchise league gives teenagers the rare opportunity to share locker rooms and train alongside elite global superstars. This exposure to high-pressure environments builds immense tactical maturity and confidence.

PWL CEO Akhil Gupta reiterated that the league's main goal is to create a sustainable pipeline that bridges Indian talent with global success. As Asia's best young wrestlers gather in Da Nang, India is eyeing a massive medal haul over the coming week.

National Basketball Championship hoops off in Puducherry

PUDUCHERRY

The highly anticipated 76th National Basketball Championship officially tipped off at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium. The prestigious mega sports event brings together elite basketball players representing various states from all across India to compete for the ultimate national title.

Puducherry Chief Minister N Rangasamy and Tamil Nadu Sports Development Minister Aadhav Arjuna jointly inaugurated the tournament. Both leaders proudly hoisted the national and federation flags to mark the grand opening of the week-long championship.

The high-profile competition is being jointly organized by the Basketball Federation of India and the Pondicherry Basketball Association, who have worked together to establish extensive arrangements for smooth match operations.

An energetic atmosphere filled the stadium as athletes adjusted to the tournament vibes. Deepika, a key member of the Uttar Pradesh women's basketball team, expressed immense confidence in her squad's preparation and court coordination.

She highly praised the host city for providing excellent accommodation facilities and creating a very welcoming environment for the visiting athletes.

While noting that many of her teammates are playing in a national tournament for the very first time, Deepika emphasized that the Uttar Pradesh squad is competing with the unified bond of a family. She expressed strong hope that their tight teamwork will ultimately lead them to win the entire tournament trophy. With top-tier sporting talent gathered in Puducherry, basketball enthusiasts can expect highly competitive, action-packed matches as states battle for supremacy over the coming days.

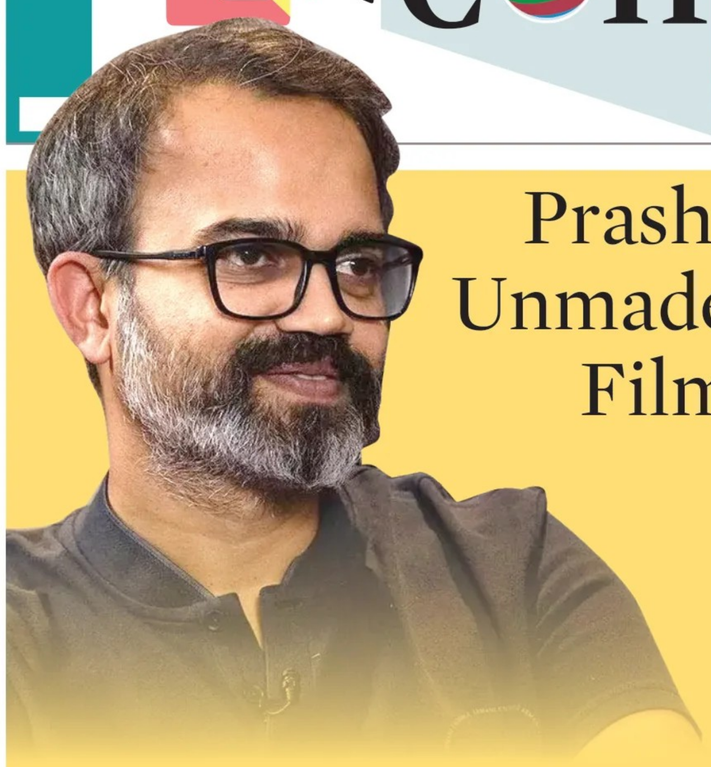
Mumbai & UP enter disability cricket championship final

BENGALURU

Mumbai and Uttar Pradesh booked their places in the grand finale of the 5th Elite National Physical Disability Cricket Championship 2026 after scoring contrasting victories in their respective semi-final matches.

Mumbai produced a dominant, all-round performance to soundly defeat Maharashtra by 45 runs in the first semifinal. Batting first, Mumbai posted a competitive total of 152/8 in their allotted overs. Explosive batsman Aakash Patil acted as the main anchor of the innings, smashing a rapid, unbeaten 41 runs off just 18 deliveries, which included five boundaries and two towering sixes.

In reply, Maharashtra completely crumbled under heavy bowling pressure and were bowled out for a meager 107 runs in 18 overs. Mumbai's Rohan Bhoir was the star with the ball, tearing through the opposition lineup to claim incredible figures of 5/12, while Ravindra Sante chipped in effectively with three wickets. The second semifinal saw a much tighter battle, as Uttar Pradesh clinched a tense four-wicket victory over Haryana. Bowler Sadik led the charge for Uttar Pradesh, taking three crucial wickets to help bowl out Haryana for just 98 runs in 16.4 overs.



Prashanth Neel Reveals Unmade Puneeth Rajkumar Film Ahvana Dream

Director Prashanth Neel has revealed that before creating the blockbuster film 'KGF', he had planned a completely different movie titled 'Ahvana' with late Kannada superstar Puneeth Rajkumar in the lead role. The project was supposed to be produced by the same banner that later backed the hugely successful 'KGF' franchise starring Yash.

Speaking recently about his upcoming film 'Dragon' with Jr NTR, Prashanth Neel shared memories of the shelved project. According to reports, the filmmaker said 'Ahvana' was one of his most personal scripts and was specially written for Puneeth Rajkumar. Neel explained that the character suited Puneeth's personality, charm and emotional screen presence perfectly.

The director said he always imagined Puneeth playing the role and never considered any other actor for the project. However, during that period, Puneeth Rajkumar was busy with several films and packed schedules. Even after repeated discussions, both sides could not find suitable dates to begin shooting. As a result, the film remained unfinished and never moved beyond the planning stage.

After 'Ahvana' was delayed, Prashanth Neel later met Hombale Films again and narrated another idea that eventually became 'KGF'. The makers liked the concept and decided to support the project, which later turned Neel into one of India's leading directors.

Prashanth Neel also shared that after Puneeth Rajkumar's death in 2021, he felt 'Ahvana' had disappeared forever because he could never imagine another actor in the role. Neel's next film, 'Dragon' starring Jr NTR, is scheduled for release on June 11, 2027.

Fans of Puneeth Rajkumar were emotional after hearing about the forgotten project. Many social media users said they would have loved to watch the actor in a Prashanth Neel film. The revelation has once again highlighted Puneeth's lasting popularity among Kannada cinema audiences and respect filmmakers hold for him.

RUKMINI VASANTH

Condemns Viral Fake AI Images Online Spread

South Indian actress Rukmini Vasanth has strongly reacted after fake AI-generated images claiming to show her started circulating widely on social media platforms. The actress issued a public statement clarifying that the viral visuals were completely fabricated and warned people against sharing such misleading content online.

In her statement, Rukmini said that she and her team recently noticed several manipulated images falsely presented as real photographs of her. She described the incident as a serious violation of privacy and condemned the misuse of artificial intelligence technology for creating fake content. The actress added that such actions were irresponsible and harmful.

Rukmini further announced that her team is taking legal and cybercrime action against individuals involved in generating and spreading the images. She also appealed to the public not to share, forward or engage with the fabricated visuals on social media.

The viral pictures reportedly showed the actress in altered situations created digitally using AI tools. One image that gained attention online appeared to show her in a green outfit surrounded by paparazzi photographers. However, many users later noticed unrealistic details in the image, leading to concerns about its authenticity. It has now been confirmed that the visuals were not genuine photographs.

The actress's statement received strong support from fans and members of the film industry. Several social media users condemned the misuse of artificial intelligence for creating misleading celebrity images and invading personal privacy.

The incident has once again raised concerns over digital safety, online ethics and the growing misuse of AI technology. Experts and supporters are calling for stricter rules and accountability to stop the spread of fake content online.

As AI-generated misinformation continues to increase globally, the controversy surrounding Rukmini Vasanth highlights the serious challenges public figures face in protecting their identity and privacy in the digital era today.

Jana Nayagan Censor Delay Continues Amid Leak Controversy And Speculation

Vijay's much-awaited film Jana Nayagan continues to face uncertainty ahead of its release. Directed by H. Vinoth, the film stars Pooja Hegde as the female lead, while Bobby Deol plays the villain. Actress Mamitha Baiju also appears in an important role.

The film has been surrounded by several controversies in recent months, including censor delays and the shocking leak of the full movie online before its official release. Despite the problems, fans remain excited because the film is expected to be Vijay's final movie before fully entering politics.

The latest update came from the film's producer during a visit to the Arulmigu Subramaniya Swamy Temple in Tiruchendur. After offering prayers, he spoke briefly with reporters about the movie's release status. According to reports, the producer said the film has still not received censor certification, but approval could arrive anytime soon. He added that the official release date would be announced immediately after the censor certificate is issued.

The producer also expressed happiness about Vijay's political future but avoided commenting on other controversies connected to the film. Reports say the makers initially planned to release Jana Nayagan in January after completing all production work. However, censor clearance issues reportedly forced the production company to seek legal help through the court.

Fans became more worried after the complete film leaked online a few months ago, even before receiving censor approval. Though a few people were reportedly arrested in connection with the leak, the incident created panic among Vijay's followers and members of the film industry.

Allu Arjun Basil Joseph Film Separate From Shaktimaan Project Rumours

Rumours about a possible collaboration between Allu Arjun and Malayalam filmmaker Basil Joseph have been creating excitement among fans for several weeks. Many social media discussions claimed the project could be connected to the long-awaited superhero film Shaktimaan. However, filmmaker Arun Anirudhan has now clarified that the upcoming film has no link to the superhero project.

During a recent interview with Club FM 94.3, Arun Anirudhan spoke about the Shaktimaan project and revealed that he and writer Paulson Skaria had earlier worked on a screenplay for Basil Joseph's next directorial film. According to him, the ambitious superhero project was planned on a massive scale but never moved forward.

Arun said the film was supposed to be Shaktimaan, but the project became complicated and did not go on floors. He added that he was unsure whether the movie would happen in the future.

The director also clearly denied rumours connecting Allu Arjun's upcoming collaboration with Basil Joseph to Shaktimaan. He explained that the superhero film was never pitched to Allu Arjun and that both projects were completely different. Arun further mentioned that official updates regarding the new collaboration would be shared soon.

When asked whether Basil Joseph attended Allu Sirish's wedding because of the collaboration, Arun revealed that Allu Arjun himself had invited the filmmaker. He also said that Allu Arjun had watched and liked Basil Joseph's superhero film Minnal Murali, after which both stars stayed in contact.

Meanwhile, Allu Arjun is currently busy shooting for Raaka, directed by Atlee. Reports suggest the big-budget entertainer may feature a parallel universe concept. The movie stars Deepika Padukone as the female lead and is already generating strong buzz among fans and film circles.

Ramayana Release May Advance Before Diwali 2026 Festival Weekend

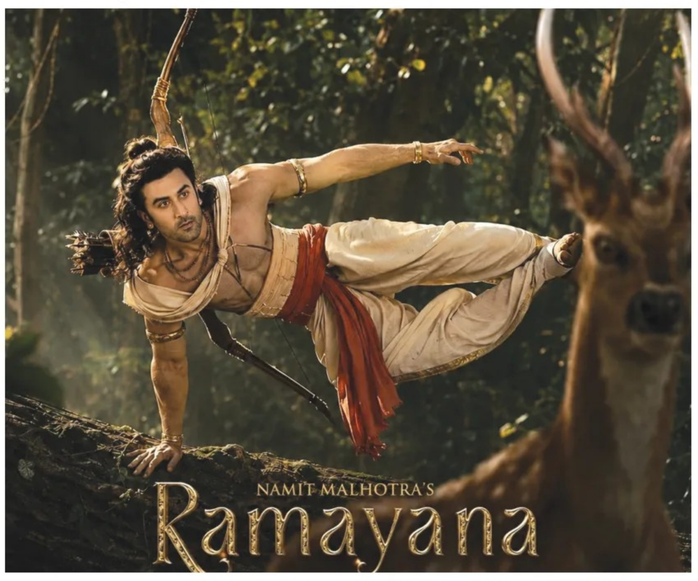
The excitement around the upcoming mythological film Ramayana has increased after reports suggested the makers may release the movie earlier than planned. The film, starring Ranbir Kapoor and Yash, was originally scheduled to arrive in theatres on November 6, 2026, during the Diwali festival season. However, industry reports now claim the release could be shifted to October 30, 2026.

The possible change is reportedly being considered as a box office strategy to give the film a longer run during the holiday period. Releasing before Diwali may help the movie attract strong audiences early and build positive word-of-mouth before the festive rush begins. Although the makers have not officially confirmed the new date, fans on social media are already expressing excitement over the development.

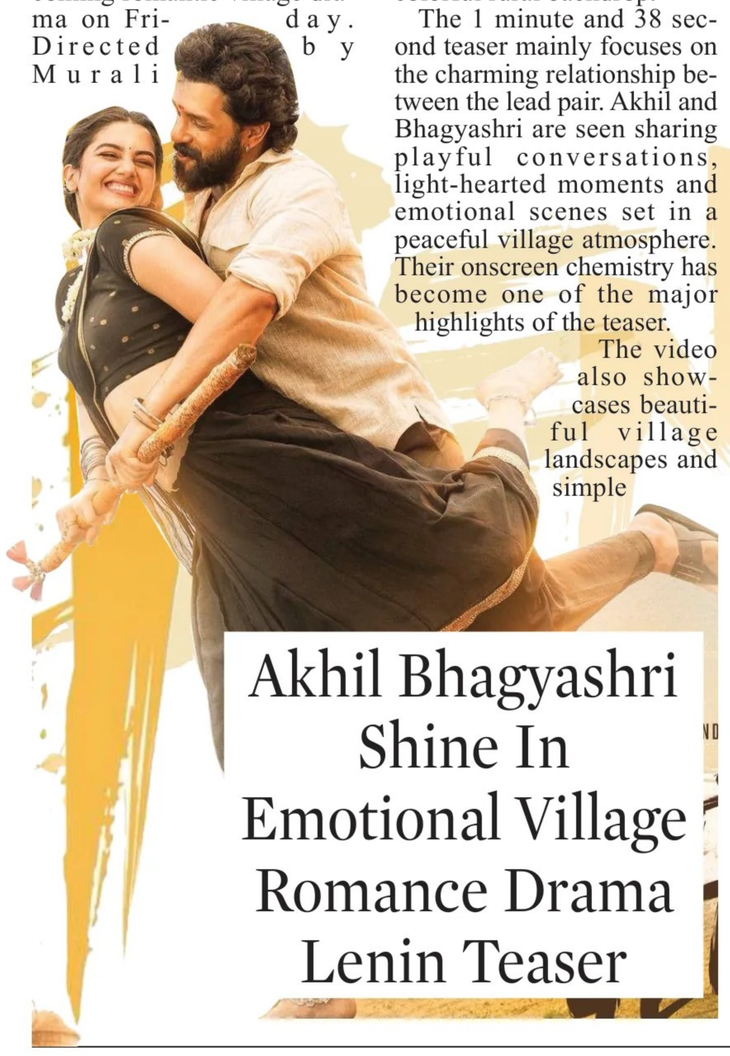
Directed by Nitesh Tiwari and produced by Namit Malhotra, Ramayana is considered one of the biggest projects in Indian cinema history. The film is based on the ancient Hindu epic and will be released as a two-part saga. Ranbir Kapoor will play Lord Ram, while Yash takes on the role of Raavan. The cast also includes Sai Pallavi as Sita, Sunny Deol as Hanuman, and Ravi Dubey as Lakshman.

Several major stars are also part of the supporting cast, including Amitabh Bachchan, Arun Govil, Lara Dutta, Vivek Oberoi, Kajal Aggarwal, Rakul Preet Singh and Shobana.

The film is reportedly being made on a massive budget, making it one of the costliest Indian films ever produced. Music for the project is being composed by Hans Zimmer and A. R. Rahman, increasing anticipation among cinema fans worldwide.



Akhil Bhagyashri Shine In Emotional Village Romance Drama Lenin Teaser



The makers of Lenin, starring Akhil Akkineni and Bhagyashri Borse, released the teaser of the upcoming romantic village drama on Friday. Directed by Murali Kishore Abburu, the teaser has already created excitement among cinema fans with its emotional love story and colorful rural backdrop.

The 1 minute and 38 second teaser mainly focuses on the charming relationship between the lead pair. Akhil and Bhagyashri are seen sharing playful conversations, light-hearted moments and emotional scenes set in a peaceful village atmosphere. Their onscreen chemistry has become one of the major highlights of the teaser.

The video also showcases beautiful village landscapes and simple lifestyle moments that perfectly match the romantic mood of the film. Both actors are seen speaking in the Rayalaseema accent, which adds authenticity to their characters. Akhil appears as a cheerful local youngster, while Bhagyashri fits naturally into the role of a village girl.

Apart from romance, the teaser also hints at action sequences towards the end, suggesting the film will combine love, emotions and intense drama. The background music composed by Thaman further adds energy to the teaser.

The makers intentionally chose May 23 to release the teaser because the date holds emotional importance for the Akkineni family. It marks the release anniversary of Manam, the final film of legendary actor Akkineni Nageswara Rao, popularly known as ANR.

The project had earlier faced delays and casting changes. Actress Sreeleela was originally selected as the female lead, and some scenes were reportedly shot with her before she exited the project. Bhagyashri Borse later joined the cast. The film also stars Shivaji and Saranya Pradeep in important roles. Lenin is scheduled for theatrical release on June 26, 2026.

Batman Sequel Crew Spotted Preparing Massive Liverpool Action Shoot

The production team of The Batman: Part II was recently spotted in Liverpool, United Kingdom, creating excitement among superhero movie fans worldwide. Reports suggest the crew was checking locations and preparing for a large-scale action sequence involving police cars, yellow taxis and extensive camera setups for the upcoming sequel starring Robert Pattinson and Zoë Kravitz.

Fans quickly shared photographs and videos online after the crew was seen around St. George's Hall and the Queensway Tunnel earlier this week. Liverpool had also served as a major filming location for the first Batman movie released in 2022, which became a huge global box office success.

According to reports, the current activity was reportedly a location recce rather than the actual filming process. The Local Democracy Reporting Service stated that the final shoot may begin sometime next month. So far, official filming locations have not been confirmed publicly.

The sequel is being directed by Matt Reeves, who also directed the first film. Reports further claim that Scarlett Johansson and Charles Dance may join the cast of the much-awaited superhero sequel.

Newly surfaced images from the crew setup have also sparked discussions among fans regarding the film's visual style.

City Hilights (English Daily) published by P. Sunil Kumar (Publisher) on behalf of Immaculate Broadcasting Consortium World News (P) Ltd., No. 18, JRV Court, Queens's Road, Bengaluru – 560001 and printed at Vihaan Media #85/J, Industrial suburb 2nd stage, Yeshwantpur Extension,Bangalore-560022, Printed at No-7/2 plot no.CA-3/1,28(p)&29(p) Kapanoor 2nd Stage Industrial Area Kapnoor Village Kalaburagi -585104. Printed at S. J. R. V. Printers, No. 208 Plot No. B-019 KSSIDC Industrial Area, Irfan Ahamed Khan Pathan, 4th Main Road Gamanagatti, Hubballi-Dharwad – 580025. and Elegant Offset Printers Pvt. Ltd. No. 5-61/1, Shed No. M-6, Yeyyadi Industrial Estate, Yeyyadi, Mangalore - 575 008. (RNI No: KARENG / 2015 / 63243), Regd. No. BGGPO-2581/2017-2019 Posted at Bengaluru PSO-560026 Email - cityhilights.news@gmail.com Phone: 080-41209042. Copyright. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.